

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE YOGA-VASISTHA

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B. L. ATREYA

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF  
THE YOGA-VĀSISṬHA









# THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

A COMPARATIVE, CRITICAL AND SYNTHETIC SURVEY OF  
THE PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS OF VASIṢṬHA AS  
PRESENTED IN THE  
YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA-MAHĀ-RĀMĀYAṆA

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BY

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BASED ON  
A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF LETTERS  
IN THE BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY.

TO  
MY TEACHER

P. B. ADHIKĀRĪ, M.A.,

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY, AND DEAN OF THE  
FACULTY OF ARTS, BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY,  
THIS WORK IS GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

August 1912 - 1913 - 1914





## FOREWORD

I HAVE pleasure in writing this brief foreword to Dr. B. L. Ātreya's work on THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA. Some of the recent historical accounts of Indian philosophy hardly do justice to the importance of this work. Dr. Ātreya's work will help to correct this defect. He gives an admirable account of the main ideas of the system and his comparisons with western views are as a rule stimulating.

Whether or not we agree with the opinion of the author in regard to the date of the work, his arguments cannot be neglected by critics. The range of the author is as wide as his judgment is measured. Dr. Ātreya's work is certain to rank among the dependable English treatises on Saṁskṛt philosophical classics.

*Waltair*

27-12-35

S. RĀDHĀ-KṚṢṆAN



## PREFACE

WITH the exception of a few additions and alterations to bring it up to date, this work embodies substantially my Thesis submitted and approved for the Degree of Doctor of Letters conferred on me by the Benares Hindu University in 1930. For various reasons, mostly of a personal nature, it remained unpublished so long. At times small events have great consequences. In 1932, my esteemed friend Dr. S. C. Dās, the Secretary of the Kāśī Tattva Sabhā, persuaded me to deliver a series of lectures on the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in the Hall of The Theosophical Society, Benares. Mr. D. K. Telang, the then General Secretary of the Indian Section of The Theosophical Society, very kindly published the first five of them in the *Theosophy in India* and generously allowed me to get them reprinted in the form of a pamphlet—*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and Its Philosophy*. The learned editor of the *Benares Hindu University Magazine*, Principal A. B. Dhruva, was similarly kind enough to publish my notes of the other five lectures and to allow me to get them reprinted in the form of another pamphlet—*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and Modern Thought*. As a result of these publications, there came a number of letters urging me to publish a larger volume on the subject. Some of the readers, having learnt that I had a bigger work ready on the subject, were so kind as to carry on correspondence on my

behalf with publishers. I cannot but mention the name of one of them, Mr. B. Subba Rao, retired Customs Officer of South Kanara District, who actually persuaded the Theosophical Publishing House to send for my MS. I felt deeply touched by the affair and must express my gratefulness to him. I am very thankful to the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, for quickly undertaking to publish this voluminous work in such a nice form. My thanks are also due to Paṇḍit S. Subrahmaṇya Sāstrin of Tanjore for his scholarly help in seeing it through the Press. I am obliged to my students, Messrs. Prabhākara Tri-vedi, B.A., and Dwārkā Prasād Shukla, B.A., for the trouble they have voluntarily taken to prepare the Index.

To compare the philosophical views of Vasiṣṭha with those of modern thinkers, I have quoted extensively from modern works. For this I am greatly indebted to the authors whom I have quoted and the publishers whose publications I have used.

B. L. ĀTREYA

*Benares Hindu University*

November 11, 1935

## PREFACE TO THE THESIS

THE world is no longer divided into the two unmeeting East and West. It is tending to become one undivided whole in matters of commerce, science and culture. It is a pity that philosophy, which ought to have been the first to obliterate the distinction of the East and the West in itself, is still lagging behind in this respect. Not many thinkers of the West are found handling philosophical problems with reference to what has already been thought upon them in India. There is hardly any work on general philosophy in which any reference is made to the views of the great thinkers of India.

Mere racial prejudice cannot be held responsible for this inexcusable behaviour of philosophical thinkers. The main reason seems to be ignorance. How can a thinker of the West, who has through his own labour arrived at a certain view on a problem before him, know that his doctrine is not really new but quite an old one held long long ago by a philosopher in India, if he has never heard of him? This ignorance is really very harmful to the advancement of human knowledge at the present time. It is nothing but waste of energy, that could have been utilized in solving other problems, to discover facts already discovered, to come to already-arrived-at conclusions, and to believe that a new theory is advanced when it was known long ago. This ignorance also keeps the present day thinker away from learning by the mistakes of others, and from growing



wiser with the help of the wisdom of the past. For, it cannot be denied that the ancient Indians also thought on the fundamental problems of existence. Man has always been a philosophical animal, and the fundamental nature of life and the Universe has always been the same. It is highly probable that some of their reflections may be of use to us at the present time. A Western thinker has even said: "Modern scientific theories are largely a reversion to the ancient teachings: with the added force of experimental evidence and a greater knowledge of detail." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 56); another, after having studied Indian philosophy, has expressed his opinion: "An examination of the Indian Vedāntic Doctrine shows that it is, in important respects, in conformity with the most advanced scientific and philosophic thought of the West and where it is not so, it is the science which will go to Vedānta and not the reverse." (Woodroffe: *The World as Power-Reality*, p. 6.)

Who is responsible for this ignorance which does not let the energy of the modern thinker be liberated for greater advancement of knowledge? I think, we Indians, who are the inheritors of the wisdom of the great ancient philosophers of this country, are to a great extent responsible for it. We have not done our duty fully in laying before the world the invaluable treasures hoarded and hidden in our lore. Much of the credit of discovering the wisdom of the East lies rightly with the Western scholars. It is only recently that Indians have heard the call of the world, and have begun to lay before it in the language of the day what the ancient philosophers of this country thought, and to approach the persistent problems of philosophy with reference to what the great thinkers of the world, of the

West as well as the East, have already thought over them. Much spade work is still to be done before any completion in the former direction is achieved and before the latter becomes the habit of the thinkers of the day.

My apology for this thesis is that, so far as I know, nobody else has, up to this time, introduced the Sāṃskṛt work *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and its very suggestive, deep and comprehensive philosophy to the modern world in a proper manner. An English translation of the work, no doubt, was published as early as 1891, but unfortunately it was not so well rendered as to enable one to know and understand the philosophical doctrines embodied in the work. This is probably the reason why the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is still lying in oblivion, so far as modern scholars of and writers on philosophy are concerned. I have not here attempted a translation of the work, but have approached it in a manner in which, I think, other works on Indian philosophy also ought to be approached in order to make the modern reader interested in them.

The thesis is divided into three "Books". In the first "book" an attempt is made to introduce the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to the reader by telling him what place it occupies in the philosophical literature of India, at what probable time it might have been composed, how it has been exploited by other ancient writers, what up to this time has been written in connection with it, in what manner it has been written, what its philosophy in general is, and by what stories the doctrines are illustrated. In this "book" I humbly claim to have given some important facts, originally discovered by me, in Chapters II and IV, which may be of great value in Oriental research.



The second "book" of the thesis deals with the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in detail. I have called this "book" as "The Philosophy of Vāsiṣṭha" as this expression sounds better, and is probably more appropriate in so far as the author of the work proposes to give us the teachings of Vāsiṣṭha. For philosophy, it does not matter much whether Vāsiṣṭha was a historical person or a mere legendary name. This "book", it may be mentioned, is not a mere analysis of the philosophical contents of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which even up to this time, so far as I know, has not been placed within the reach of the modern scholar, except through three small papers, "The Philosophy of Vāsiṣṭha", "The Divine Imaginism of Vāsiṣṭha", and "Gauḍa-pāda and Vāsiṣṭha", which I had the privilege to read before the Indian Philosophical Congress in 1925, 1926 and 1927 in its sessions at Calcutta, Benares and Bombay respectively. Here I have tried to present in a systematic manner the philosophical doctrines that are scattered here and there in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* without any systematic arrangement suited to modern times; I have not, however, confined myself to being a translator and systematizer of the thoughts of Vāsiṣṭha. I have also tried here and there to elucidate them to some extent, and have reminded the reader of similar thoughts in the writings of other thinkers, ancient and modern Indian and Western. At the end of this "book" I have given a brief summary of the philosophy and my own estimate of it with regard to certain important and general problems of philosophy. In quoting from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, I have, it may be mentioned to the reader, translated the original Saṁskṛt expressions some times freely, when the literal translation of them would damage English idioms or would not make the sense



very clear. I have also not cared to translate a whole stanza or a whole line when only a part of it was required to be quoted. I have indicated within brackets the exact place in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of the quotations. [The Nirṇaya-sāgara Press, Bombay (1918) edition.] The first number of the reference indicates the *Prakaraṇa*, the second the *sarga*, and the third the *śloka* (stanza). Reference has also been made to the works of the authors whom I have quoted.

The third "book" of the thesis is in Sāṃskṛt.<sup>1</sup> I have named it "*Vāsiṣṭha-darśana*" (The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha). In this portion I have collected from the huge work *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* stanzas and lines of philosophical import, classified them according to my own principle, and re-arranged them so as to form a systematized manual of Vasiṣṭha's philosophy in the original language. No authorship is claimed by me of any line in this book. I am only responsible for the arrangement and names given to the parts, chapters, sections and sub-sections of this manual. In the brackets I have indicated the place in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of the stanzas and lines which compose this book. My originality in connection with it is only like that of a gardener who does not create or originate the plants of his garden but only plans their proper place in it. The value of this garden of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha (*Vāsiṣṭha-darśana*) lies mainly in the fact that it is the first garden of its own kind, the contents of which are directly taken from a huge forest in which one knows not where what lies.

<sup>1</sup> This "book" has been separately published under the title of "*Śrī Vāsiṣṭha Darśanam*" in the Princess of Wales Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts of the U. P. Government, edited by Principal Gopīnāth Kavirāj, M.A., of the Govt. Sanskrit College, Benares. Most of the passages collected therein have, however, been included in the present edition as footnotes.

It may be mentioned here that I am entirely and solely responsible for the selection of the subject of my thesis, its plan, arrangement and language (English), for the interpretation of Vasiṣṭha's philosophy, for comparisons, and for the opinion expressed on it. But I am glad to mention that I have been very greatly encouraged and inspired in this work by my revered *guru* Professor Phaṇi Bhūṣhaṇ Adhikāri, the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Benares Hindu University; by Principal Gopī-nāth Kavi-rāj of the Government Sanskrit College, Benares; and by Dr. Surendra Nāth Dās-gupta, the well-known author of *A History of Indian Philosophy*, to whom all my thanks are due.

B. L. ĀTREYA

*Benares Hindu University*

April 2, 1928

ॐ

प्राज्ञं विज्ञातविज्ञेयं सम्यग्दर्शनमाधयः ।  
न दहन्ति वनं वर्षासिक्तमग्निशिखा इव ॥ १ ॥  
यद्यदासाद्यते किञ्चित्केनचित्क्वचिदेव हि ।  
स्वशक्तिसंप्रवृत्त्या तल्लभ्यते नान्यतः क्वचित् ॥ २ ॥  
(योगवासिष्ठ—२ । ११ । ४१ ; ५ । ४३ । १३)



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# ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	INCORRECT	CORRECT
9	1	(sectarischen)	(sektarischen)
"	2	eine religiöses	ein religiöses
"	3	Werk,"	Werk . . . ."
"	"	that	That
13	34	seine	eine
14	1	Abkürzung	Abkürzung
"	"	sāra lebte.	sāra . . . lebte.
"	2	alter	älter
"	3	erwähnt	erwähnt
"	29	three-quarters	a quarter
15	12	and	,
18	8	tattva-vidāḥ	tattva-vidāḥ
19	14	and	and in
21	28, 34	<i>vivartta</i>	<i>vivarta</i>
23	13	Bhatṛ-hari	Bhartṛ-hari
33	2	Surāj	Suraj
"	17	<i>Ānanada</i>	<i>Ānanda</i>
63	6	preceptor	preceptor
73	19	<i>Cahar</i>	<i>Cahār</i>
84	23	in	of
86	6	of god	of a god
87	7	grows	grows up
89	2	in	an
99	20	self-knowledge	Self-knowledge
"	32	effort	effect

PAGE	LINE	INCORRECT	CORRECT
111	30	०नारिभिः	०नारीभिः
118	31	वस्तु नायाति	वस्तुना याति
120	32	०वशसम्	०वैशसम्
122	1	oneself engaging	engaging oneself
123	18	कलेवरम्	कलेवरम्
125	30	संसारात्तरणे	संसारोत्तरणे
131	30	सोऽस्मिद्धै	सोऽस्मिद्धै
"	31	कर्मकृतं	कर्म कृतं
132	31	०सत्कार्यवान्भव	०सत्कार्यवान्भव
136	30	ऽधशमस्तथा	ऽध शमस्तथा
145	24	<i>Sadhana</i>	<i>Sadhana</i>
147	21	transmuted	transmitted
151	27	ऐक्यं	ऐक्यं
166	30	स्वतेजः स्पन्दिता०	स्वतेजःस्पन्दिता०
178	27	<i>and</i>	<i>and</i>
183	32	कदाचिद्वैष्णव्यः	कदाचिदपि वैष्णव्यः
184	29	मधाविवनवा०	मधाविव नवा०
"	32	०राशयाः	०राशयः
189	27	त्वनुत्तिष्ठति	त्वनुत्तिष्ठति
252	29	सतत	सततं
259	25	०जरण	०जरणं
260	23	यात्यङ्गरसा०	यात्यङ्ग रसा०
271	3	a lotus flower	gold
274	19	infinite	infinite ;
286	18	यम भटा	यमभटा
292	19	our	one's
"	21	one's	our
293	4	our	one's
311	29	०दाढ्यात्मकं	दाढ्यात्मकं
353	3	as an	an

PAGE	LINE	INCORRECT	CORRECT
365	28	बहु	बहु
372	30	which is	which it is
374	31	necessary	accessory
378	2	accosmism	acosmism
380	1		
381	7		
389	13	is	is a
392	23	<i>Compnesation</i>	<i>Compensation</i>
393	22	all	all on
395	12	that	that is
451	4	static	static aspect
456	18	pleature	pleasure
457	1	opening	closing
461	7	<i>Atmā-</i>	<i>Ātmā-</i>
481	32	कर्मत्याग	कर्मत्याग
484	18	" The	The
510	22	qeen	queen
533	25	even	even when
555	11	it	they
556	20	objective	object
567	29	very	the very
576	33	o	to
577	4	ecstasy. And	ecstasy ; and
604	9	Berkeleyian	Berkeleian
617	19	Breilley	Bareilly
620	12	concerned	conserved



BOOK I

INTRODUCTION TO THE  
YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA



1800

INTRODUCTION TO THE  
ARTS AND MYSTERY

## CHAPTER I

### THE PLACE OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL LITERATURE OF INDIA

THE *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, known also as *Mahā-rāmāyaṇa*, *Ārṣa-rāmāyaṇa*, *Jñāna-vāsiṣṭha*, *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa*, or simply as *Vāsiṣṭha* (Winternitz: *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*, p. 443-note) is a voluminous Sāṃskṛt work, which is very widely read, in the original as well as in vernacular translations, throughout India. It is the Bible of those who seek Self-knowledge and Liberation, as the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Tulasī-dāsa and the *Bhagavata* are for devotees and the *Bhagavad-gītā* for men of action. Thousands of men and women, from the lowest to the highest grade of culture, find solace in the study of this wonderful work, which contains many stories, in which even children may find pleasure, and philosophical speculations, which the brightest intellect may find difficult to comprehend. In grandeur it may be compared to the Himālayas, which, being situated on the earth, are within the reach of all, but whose lofty peaks baffle the attempt of even the most earnest explorers. Men of all tastes, literary, religious or philosophical, find interest in it. It is really one of the wonders that the mind of India has produced in its literature, and surely the best companion for one, who is anxious to realise Cosmic Consciousness and to live on the heights of spiritual peace, where the best and noblest

men of India have always aspired to stand. All who have had the fortune of studying the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* share this view, and others who will study it earnestly will not have occasion to differ much.

Svāmī Rāma Tirtha, one of the greatest saints of modern India and a great Vedāntin, said in one of his American lectures: "One of the greatest books, and the most wonderful, according to me, ever written under the sun, is *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which nobody on earth can read without realising God-consciousness." (*In Woods of God-realisation*, Delhi Edition, Vol. III, p. 295.) "This work," he says in another American lecture, "is clear, comprehensive, and written in a real and true poetry." (*Ibid.*, p. 327.) Bhagavān Dās, an erudite scholar of Indian thought, writes in the Prefatory Note to his *Mystic Experiences*: "The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, a Samskr̥t work, in thirty-two thousand *ślokas*, or sixty-four thousand lines, is highly honoured among Indian Vedāntins, for its philosophy and its hints on practical mysticism, as also for its literary beauty and poetry. The saying about it, among the Vedāntins, is that it is a work of the *siddhāvastha*, i.e., for the philosopher-yogin, who, having mastered the theory, is passing on to the practice of it, while the other well-known works, even the *Gīta*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the *Brahma-sūtras*, are works of the *sādhana-vastha*, i.e., for those who are yet trying to master the theory." Lālā Baij Nāth, in his introduction to the *Hindi Translation of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, writes: "On the Vedānta Philosophy, there has not, up to this time, been written any other work so big, and expounding the doctrines with so many stories, illustrations and arguments, as *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. All will agree, when it is said that, by the study of this work alone, even the most passionate and worldly-minded

will become dispassionate and will gradually realise peace within." (*Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Bhāṣa-ṭīkā*, Vol. II, *Bhūmika*, p. 7) and "Whether the work is a production of Vālmiki or not, it is the crest-jewel of all the works on the Vedānta, and no aspirant of liberation can afford to neglect it." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, *Bhūmika*, p. 4.) Surāj Nārāyaṇa Mehar, in the Introduction to his Urdu Translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, writes: "Whosoever studies *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* becomes a jñānin (knower of truth)." (*Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*, p. 6.) Considering the loftiness of its thought, K. Nārāyaṇasvāmī Aiyar says in his Introduction to the English Translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*: "This work, in the words of Madame Blavatsky, is meant for the few only!" (*A Translation of Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, p. viii.)

The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* himself was quite confident of the uniqueness, greatness, effectiveness and beauty of his own composition, and has given expression to his opinion in several places of the work. Here are some of his statements: 'It is a composition of thirty-two thousand verses and is known as the bestower of *Nirvāṇa*. (II, 17, 6.) It is written in a very intelligible style, ornamented with literary beauties, and full of illustrations in support of the doctrines expounded. (II, 18, 33.) Having studied, understood and realised its philosophy, one does not stand in need of any other performance (penance, meditation and chanting, etc.) for liberation. (II, 18, 35.) Having learnt the methods of liberation expounded in this work which bring about direct Intuition, even a child comes to realise the Self. (VI b, 215, 6.) It brings all sufferings to an end, and gives a unique consolation to the heart. (II, 10, 9.) It takes one to the state of the highest bliss, which is beyond pleasure and pain. (II, 10, 7.) He who studies



it daily comes to attain God-consciousness, (III, 8, 13) and becomes liberated even while living in this life (III, 8, 15). With the help of this work one crosses over the ocean of misery of existence. (I, 2, 14.) It is really a store of wisdom, and contains all that is best anywhere.' (III, 8, 12.)

The greatness, authoritativeness and value of the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* are also borne out by the influence it has had on the History of Indian Thought. A comparative study of the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* with the *Vairāgya-sūtra* and *Vākya-padīya* of Bhartṛ-hari, with the *Maṇḍukya-kārikas* of Gauḍa-pāda, with the *Viveka-cūḍa-maṇi* of Saṁkarācārya, and with the *Manasollāsa* of Sureśvarācārya, will clearly reveal the influence which the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* exercised over these illustrious thinkers of the Advaita school of thought. (See Chapter II of this part.) About ten centuries ago, in the first half of the 9th century A.D., when the great Saṁkarācārya had succeeded in creating a wide-spread interest for the Advaita philosophy, the huge work *Yoga-vāsisūtha*, which, on account of its size, was available to the few only, was summarised into a *Laghu-Yoga-vāsisūtha* by Abhinanda, a Gauḍa Brāhmaṇa of Kashmir. (See Winternitz: *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*, Vol. III, p. 443; Konow: *HOS, Karpūra-maṇjarī*, p. 197.) Since then, it has become a very popular work and has inspired many writers and schools of thought. A careful study of the *Minor Upaniṣads* will reveal that many of them are wholly or partially composed of the ślokas quoted *verbatim* from the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*. All the six chapters of the *Mahā Upaniṣad*, except the first, all the five chapters but the introductory portion of the *Anna-pūrṇa Upaniṣad*, the whole of the *Akṣi Upaniṣad*, the second, which is the main, chapter, of the *Muktika Upaniṣad*, the fourth chapter of the *Vārāha Upaniṣad*, 50 ślokas



of the *Bṛhat-saṁnyāsa Upaniṣad*, 18 ślokaś of the *Sanḍilya Upaniṣad*, 10 ślokaś of the *Yājñavalkya Upaniṣad*, 3 ślokaś of the *Maitreyi Upaniṣad*, 2 ślokaś of the *Yoga-kundali Upaniṣad*, and one śloka of the *Pañgala Upaniṣad* are taken *verbatim* from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The section on *Samādhi* in the *Jabala-darśana Upaniṣad*, the whole of the *Tejo-bindu Upaniṣad*, ślokaś 2-11 of Chapter I of the *Maitreyi Upaniṣad*, ślokaś 1-11 of the fourth section of the *Maitrāyaṇi Upaniṣad*, ślokaś 34-37, 59, 60 of part I, ślokaś 58-64 of part VI and whole of part IV of the *Yoga-sikha Upaniṣad*, ślokaś 1-19 of the part V of *Tripura-tāpini Upaniṣad*, ślokaś 1-5 of the *Amṛta-bindu Upaniṣad*, and ślokaś 12-16 of the second part of the *Saubhāgya-lakṣmī Upaniṣad*, when compared with the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, clearly reveal its influence, if not direct borrowing from it, as in the case of the former group of the *Upaniṣads*. (See Chapter IV of this part.) Vidyāraṇya (Mādhavācārya), a well-known writer of the first half of the fourteenth century, must have considered the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as a book of high authority, for he quotes it often in his very famous work *Pañca-dasī*, and has based his *Jīvan-mukti-viveka* chiefly on it, quoting no less than 253 ślokaś from it in support of his thesis. He also seems to have summarised the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in his *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra-saṁgraha* of 2300 ślokaś, a manuscript of which is reported by Hall (Hall: *Bibliography*, *Vedānta*, MS., CXLVIII) to be existing in the Govt. Sanskrit College Library, Benares. The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is also quoted in the *Bhakti-sāgara* of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa (Winternitz: G. I. L., Vol. III, p. 443 note), *Rama-gīta* (*Samādhi* 17, 23, 31, 32, etc.) and the *Haṭha-yoga-pradīpikā* (IV, 15, 22, 23, 56, and 61), and its commentary. Viṣṇāna-bhikṣu (1550) and Prakāśānanda (1565),

the author of the *Vedānta-muktavali*, also quote it as an authority in support of their views.

All these facts clearly indicate that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is one of the very important works on Indian Philosophy, and that, in the history of Indian thought, it has stood on an equal footing with the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gīta*, for the last one thousand years at least.

Yet, it is very strange that it has not received the attention it deserves from modern scholars of Indian Philosophy, by whom its study appears to have been conspicuously neglected. There is, for example, no mention of even the name of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in Volume I of Dr. Dāsa-gupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, where he devotes a long chapter to the philosophy of Advaita Vedānta of Gauḍa-pāda and Śaṅkara and the Schools started by them. (We are, however, very glad to mention that there is a chapter devoted to the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in Vol. II of Prof. Dāsa-gupta's work recently published.) There is not a single paragraph on the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in the two volumes of Prof. Rādhākṛṣṇan's *Indian Philosophy*, not to say of the previous works on Indian Philosophy by other writers. Even more surprising is the omission of the name of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* from the very excellent Bibliography of Indian Philosophy prepared by Prof. Vāsudeva Abhyāṅkara Sāstri and appended to the *Sarva-darśana-saṁgraha*, edited by him and published in the Bombay Govt. Oriental (Hindu) Series.

The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* has not only been thus neglected, but also misunderstood by some eminent writers. Dr. Winternitz, for example, writes in his *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*, Vol. III on page 443: "Bei vielen Vedanta-  
werken kann man zweifeln, ob sie der philosophischen



oder theologischen (sectarischen) Litteratur zuzurechnen sind. So ist das *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* . . . mehr eine religiöses Werk," that is, "With regard to several Vedānta works, one can doubt whether they are to be looked upon as belonging to philosophical or theological (sectarian) literature. So is the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*—more a religious work". In the same way Farquhar thinks: "The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* is one of the many Samskṛt poems written in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries to popularise a philosophy or theology of a sect. It is scarcely parallel with the *Adhyātma-rāmāyaṇa*." (Farquhar: *An Outline of Religious Literature of India*, p. 228.) Prof. Rādhākṛṣṇan seems to accept this view, when he writes: "Many of the later *Upaniṣads*, such as *Mahopaniṣad* and religious works like *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and *Adhyātma-rāmāyaṇa* advocate Advaitism." (Rādhākṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 452.) A careful study of the work, however, will convince one that it does not belong to any sect or religion, but is a purely philosophical work written in popular but literary style. It is in no way inferior to many works which are usually accepted as philosophical, as distinguished from the sectarian ones.

If not even for its philosophy, which is sufficiently deep, comprehensive, rational and invigorating, the study of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is very important and indispensable for the correct understanding of the history and evolution of the Advaita Vedānta. For, it is probably an earlier work than those of Saṃkara and Gauḍapāda. (See Chapter II.) We think, to indulge in a metaphor, the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is the holy Ganges of Advaita philosophy—issuing forth from the Himālayas of the *Upaniṣads*, flowing onward to the infinite ocean of the future, and increasing in its depth, volume and

breadth, as it passes on—at the Prayāga of the Hindu culture, where it is immensely enriched by the deep and quiet Yamunā of Buddhism and the invisible, yet really present, Sarasvatī of the Sāṃkhya thought—both having their ultimate source in the different portions of the same Himālayas of the *Upaniṣads*. It is the sacred Tri-veṇī—the three united as one—of India, a dip into which is declared to purge one of all sins of ignorance, delusion and bondage. Sāṃkara is the great and immortal architect who added to the glory of the ever-flowing Ganges by constructing the Benares ghats, temples and palaces of concepts, worships, and orders of his school of Vedānta.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PROBABLE DATE OF THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA*

It is very difficult to come to a definite conclusion about the date of many Sanskrit works. The reasons are too well-known to be mentioned. In the case of a work like the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, the difficulty is not only that the author of the work does not say anything about himself, or his time and place, but also the orthodox belief that the ancient Ṛṣis could have an experience of future events as of the immediate present. The doctrine, that the events of all the four yugas or cycles are repeated in each round of the manifestation of the universe (stated even in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in the story of Bhusuṇḍa, in the first part of the *Nirvāṇa-prakaraṇa*) very much stands in the way of the modern historical method. What appear to be anachronisms are, on this belief, explained away as being due to the supersensuous vision of the author. Such an explanation is attempted in connection with the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, by K. Nārāyaṇa-svāmi in his Introduction to the English translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*: "The events recorded herein (i.e., the teachings of Vasiṣṭha to Rāma-candra) should have occurred in the Tretā-yuga, when Rāma-candra incarnated. But in the initiation of Rāma by Vasiṣṭha, as recorded in the work, we find the story of Arjuna introduced therein.



Is it not an anachronism? some may ask. We shall find the objection to vanish into the air, if we bear in mind the fact that nature is cycling round and round and is not a sealed book to our ancient Ṛṣis. Every recurrence of the yugas brings with it its own Vyāsas, Rāmas and others. Therefore before the divine vision of our ancient Ṛṣis, all the events of past as well as future, march in the procession as recorded in the tablets of Citra-gupta. This is the very objection which many Orientalists have taken without understanding exactly the views of the Hindus as regards the book of nature." (*A Translation of Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, Intr. p. xxii.)

On the other hand, a few modern scholars, who have turned their attention to the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, commit the mistake of putting it at a very late date. J. N. Farquhar, for example, thinks: "The *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* is one of the many Saṁskṛt poems written in the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries." (*Religious Literature of India*, page 228.) Prof. Śiva Prasāda Bhaṭṭācārya, in a paper entitled "*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa, its probable date and place of inception*," read at the third Oriental Conference, Madras (1924), concludes: "All this points out to the 10th to 12th century as the probable date." (*The Proceedings and Transactions of the Oriental Conference*, Madras, p. 554.)

These and such other views, which put the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* at a very late date, cannot be accepted, mainly for two reasons:

(i) By the time of Vidyāranya (the first half of the fourteenth century) the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* had become an authoritative work. He quotes it in several places in his famous book *Pañca-dasī*, and bases his *Jīvan-mukti-viveka* mainly on the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, quoting no less than 253

slokas from it in support of his views. Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya does not seem to know this fact when he writes: "No writer and scholiast on philosophy earlier than Vijñāna-bhikṣu seems to use it as an authority." (*Proceedings of the Madras Oriental Conference*, p. 549.) Vijñāna-bhikṣu, we must remember, is believed to have lived in the sixteenth century.

(ii) By the middle of the 9th century the huge work *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, of about 32,000 ślokas was summarised into a *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra* or *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of some 6,000 ślokas by Abhinanda, a Gauḍa Brāhmaṇa of Kashmir. This fact is accepted as true by Konow (*HOS. Karpūra-mañjarī*, page 197), by Keith (*Catalogue: Bodleian Library*, MS. 840), and by Winternitz in his *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*. (Vol. III, page 444.) A MS. of this *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra* of Abhinanda is reported by Hall (*Bibliography. Vedānta*, MS. No. CXLIV) to be existing in the Govt. Samskr̥t College Library, Benares. *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* has also been published by the Nirpayasāgar Press, Bombay (1887). Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya was not probably aware of this fact even, as in a footnote on page 553 of the *Proceedings of the Madras Oriental Conference* he says "The *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* or *Mokṣopāya-sāra*, which presupposes the bigger work, . . . is a work in 92 verses by a Bengālī writer . . . named Abhinanda . . . who is thus to be distinguished from the famous Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kashmir."

Dr. Winternitz in fixing the date of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* argues: "There is an abbreviated edition, *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra* of Gauḍa Abhinanda who lived in the middle of the 9th century. The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* must be older. As Śaṁkara does not mention the work, it is probably written by one of his contemporaries. (Es gibt . . . seine



Abkürzung, den Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra lebte. Das *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* muss also alter sein. Das Śaṅkara das Werk noch nicht erwähnt, ist es vielleicht von einem seiner Zeitgenossen verfasst)." (G. I. L., Vol. III, page 444.) We do not, however, find much logic in this argument, which is positively fallacious. This view fails to see how it could be possible for such a huge work to have been composed, become famous, studied and summarised within a few decades only, for the date of Śaṅkara accepted by modern scholars is 788-820. A. D. (Vide, G. I. L. Vol. III, page 434; and *Theism in Medieval India*, page 308 and the footnote on it.) And Gauḍa Abhinanda "was the son of Jayanta Vṛtti-kāra. His great-great-grand-father lived under the king Muktāpiḍa Lalitāditya of Kashmir, whose succession according to Bühler cannot have taken place before 724. A. D. Gauḍa Abhinanda must therefore have lived about the middle of the 9th century." (Konow: *Karpūra-mañjarī*, HOS. Vol. IV, page 197.) Composing a Samskr̥t work of about thirty-two thousand (now available 27,587) śloka ornamented with literary beauties, is itself a life-long work. To be known far and wide in times of manuscript-publication and slow communication, it must have required several generations, specially when the work was a huge one. Before Abhinanda set to summarising it, it must have become well-known and much appreciated and needed. It must have taken a long time to study and select extracts from it. All this could have hardly taken place within three-quarters of a century after the death of Śaṅkara. Yet this is what the view of Dr. Winternitz presupposes. We cannot therefore accept this view.

Now, is there any reason why we should positively believe the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to be a post-Śaṅkara work, and is there any difficulty in placing it before Śaṅkara?

Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya has argued: "The reference to the school of Vedānta philosophy as the *Vedāntins* or *Vedānta-vādins*, would take us to the time not earlier than that of the great Śaṅkarācārya." (*Proceedings of the Oriental Conference*, Madras, p. 552.) The mere occurrence of the word *Vedāntin* or *Vedānta-vādin* in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* would not prove its posteriority to Śaṅkara, seeing that the word *Vedānta* for the *Upaniṣads* is a very old one (See the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, III, 2, 6; *Svetasvatara Upaniṣad*, VI, 22), that there is sufficient indication in the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikas* of Gauḍa-pāda, whose priority to Śaṅkara cannot be doubted and that even before Gauḍa-pāda there must have existed a school of thinkers, who expounded the philosophy of the Vedānta. (See *Kārikā*, II, 31.) There is no reason why they should not have been called by the name of *Vedāntins* or *Vedānta-vādins*. The reference in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to *Vedāntins* is not therefore a decisive factor to prove that it must have been a post-Śaṅkara work. In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* we do not find any other indication against its priority to Śaṅkara. There are, on the other hand, some grounds in its favour:

(1) The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is no doubt a work on Advaita Philosophy and its general standpoint is very much similar to that of the School of Śaṅkara, with some differences here and there. Yet it is very curious and conspicuous that the peculiar terminology of Śaṅkara is quite unknown to the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. This could not have been so, had the author been a writer posterior to Śaṅkara. The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* seems to be totally ignorant of Śaṅkara and his philosophy and school. Some of the terms and conceptions of Śaṅkara and his immediate followers, which are conspicuous by their absence in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, are noted



here: (a) Adhyāsa; (b) Sādhana-catustaya consisting of viveka, virāga, śaṭ-saṃpat (śama, dama, uparati, titikṣā, śraddhā and samādhāna) and mumukṣutva; (c) Saguṇa and Nirguṇa Brahman; (d) Aparā Brahman; (e) Saviśeṣa and Nirviśeṣa Brahman; (f) Īśvara, as distinguished from Brahman; (g) Upādhi; (h) Prārabdha karma; (i) Saṃcita karma; (j) Krama-mukti; (k) Bādhā; (l) Pañca-koshas; (m) the stereotyped conception of Māyā and Avidyā as the Upādhi of Īśvara; (n) beginninglessness of Avidyā and Karma; (o) the Evolutionary Process of the world as different from that of the Sāṃkhya (Sāṃkara's view of cosmology is quite unknown to Vasiṣṭha); (p) the peculiar way of interpreting the Mahā-vākyas of the *Upaniṣads* adopted by the School of Sāṃkara, etc., etc.

(2) In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* the Advaita-vāda is not found to be a finished and conceptualized system as in Sāṃkara, but it is presented therein in a cloud-like, vague and uncertain form and without any fixity of meaning in the terms used.

(3) The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* does neither try to defend his own position by arguments or Upaniṣadic texts, nor criticise others; but quite the opposite was the tendency of the times of Sāṃkarācārya, and specially of his own school.

(4) From the time of Gauḍa-pāda and Sāṃkara the Śruti has been considered as the supreme and unquestionable source of the Advaita Vedānta or Advaita Philosophy; but we do not find this tenet in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. For Vasiṣṭha Experience is the Ultimate *Pramāṇa* of knowledge. (II. 19. 16; VI b. 197. 15).

(5) A careful and comparative study of the poetical works of Sāṃkarācārya, particularly the *Viveka-cūḍa-maṇi*—Sāṃkara's authorship of which is generally accepted by



scholars like Abhyaṅkara, (See the Bombay Govt. Edition of the *Sarva-darśana-saṁgraha*, Appendix, Bibliography) and Rādhākṛṣṇan (see *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 450)—will show clearly that Śaṅkara was not only influenced by the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, but also thoroughly imbibed its teachings, and in many places composed almost literally identical verses and gave expression to almost the same thoughts. This statement will be borne out by Appendix I to this chapter, where we have compared more than a hundred extracts from the poetical works of Śaṅkara with extracts from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It cannot be maintained that of the two, the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is the borrower, for the technical terms of Śaṅkara, found in his works from which the extracts are taken, are not found in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

A comparative study of the *Māṇḍūkya-kārikas* of Gauḍa-pāda—which are undoubtedly earlier than Śaṅkara—and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, will clearly show that the Advaita philosophy, that existed before the advent of the great Śaṅkarācārya, is more akin to the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* than to that of Śaṅkara and his followers. There is much that is in common between the *Kārikas* and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, not only in thought (*Vide*, *Gauḍa-pāda and Vāsiṣṭha: A Comparative Survey of Their Philosophy*—a paper read at the third session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Bombay, by the present writer), but also in language. (*Vide*, Appendix II to this chapter.) The problem before us now is: who is the earlier of the two—the author of the *Kārikas* or of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*? The problem is no doubt a difficult one, yet there are certain reasons which convince us of the priority of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to the *Kārikas*:

(1) The *Kārikas* are offered as a sort of commentary on the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* and are not written

as an independent work on the Advaita Philosophy. They mean to interpret the *Upaniṣad* from the standpoint of a particular school of thought. Gauḍa-pāda does not claim to give us an original philosophy of his own. He gives us an indication of the pre-existence of thinkers with whom he agrees and whom he follows. They are referred to as "Vedānteṣu vicakṣaṇāḥ" (II, 31), "tattva-vidāḥ" (II, 34), "nāyakaḥ" (IV, 98), and as "buddhāḥ" (IV, 88) as distinguished from the Buddhists whom he has called "Bauddhāḥ." (IV, 19; and IV, 100.) What is to be specially noticed in this connection is that the views attributed to these thinkers and upheld in the *Kārikas* are found in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* almost identically. (*Vide*, Appendix II to this chapter.)

(2) On the other hand, the philosopher Vasiṣṭha in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* claims to have received his doctrines directly from Brahmā and to have realised the truth of them in his own experience. (II, 10.) The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha includes in itself all the views which the *Kārikas* refer to as pre-existing, such as the illusoriness (*māyā*) of the world compared to "gandharvanagara", "svapna", "magical show", etc.; and the doctrine of "ajāti".

(3) The *Kārikas* represent a later phase of the Advaita philosophy than the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, when it tended to become critical, hostile, and polemical towards other contemporary schools of thought. The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, on the other hand, represents the earlier phase, when the Advaita philosophy existed in harmony with its sister-philosophies, looking at them all from a higher point of view wherein all contradictions are harmonised. In this respect the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is nearer to the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* than the *Maṇḍukya-kārikas* or the writings



of Sāṃkhya are. Here we note a few examples of the catholicity, reconciliatory tendency and harmonising spirit of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which, in later times, were revived by Vijñāna-bhikṣu under the inspiration of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*:

(i) "From our standpoint" says Vāsiṣṭha, "there is no difference in 'bāhyārtha-vāda' (Realism) and 'vijñāna-vāda' (Idealism)." (VI b, 38, 4.)

(ii) Having pointed out how he differs in his opinion on the nature of the mind from the points of view of the "Naiyāyikas, Sāṃkhyas, Cārvākas, Jaiminiyas, Ārhatas, Bauddhas, Vaiśeṣikas, and Pāṇca-rātras, etc." (III, 96, 49-50), he adds: "All these various doctrines arising at different times and different countries, however, lead to the same Supreme Truth, like the many different paths leading travellers from different places to the same city. It is ignorance of the absolute truth and the misunderstanding of the different doctrines that cause their followers to quarrel with one another with bitter animosity. They consider their own particular dogmas to be the best, as every traveller may think, though wrongly, his own path to be the only and the best path." (III, 96, 51-53.)

(iii) Not only does the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* regard other systems of philosophy with respect, but also thinks that it is advisable for every man to stick to his own method of spiritual realisation, provided he meets with success and makes progress through it. He says, "The method by which a man makes progress is the best for him. He should not change it for another, which may not look right to him, nor pleases him, nor is useful to him." (VI b, 130, 2.)

(iv) With regard to the Absolute Reality, the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* says that it is the same, "that is called Sūnya by the Sūnya-vādins, Brahman by the

Brahma-vids, Puruṣa by the Sāṃkhya thinkers, Īśvara by the followers of the Yoga school, Śiva by the Śaivas, Time by those who believe Time to be the only reality, the Self by those who think the Self to be so, Non-self by the philosophers who do not believe in the reality of the Self, Madhyama by the Mādhyamikas, and the All by those who have a vision of equality all around" (V, 87, 18-20).

Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya, in this connection, thinks "The nature of the ideal and temperament held up for the realization could not be thought of in Buddhist India before the days of the Pāla kings of Beṅgāl, when we remember that the writer was essentially a Hindu, treating a subject essentially Hinduite." (*Proceedings of the Oriental Conference*, Madras, p. 551.) A study of the *Harṣa-carita*, however, will convince any one that in the first half of the 7th century, the date assigned to the work, such views could be possibly held, and such an "ideal and temperament held up for the realisation" could be thought of in that part of India which used then to be called the Madhya-deśa and which we now call the United Provinces. Bāṇa, the author of *Harṣa-carita*, has nicely depicted a beautiful picture of the general culture of his times. "He describes", writes Carpenter, "a visit paid by the king Harṣa to a Buddhistic recluse, named Divākara Mitra. Numbers of Buddhists were there from various provinces. . . . There, too, were Jainas in white robes, and worshippers of Kṛṣṇa. The singular assembly included mendicants of various orders and religious students of all kinds; disciples of Kapila (adherents of the great Sāṃkhya school), Laukāyatikas (Materialists), students of the Upaniṣads (Vedāntins), followers of Kaṇāda (the reputed author of Vaiśeṣika philosophy), believers in God



as a Creator (the Nyāya school), students of the Institutes of Law, students of the Purāṇas, adepts in sacrifices and in Grammar, and others besides—all diligently following their own tenets, pondering, urging objections, raising doubts and resolving them, discussing and explaining moot points of doctrine in perfect harmony". "Here is a picture", adds Carpenter, "of mutual independence and goodwill on a still wider scale than at Nalanda. But the poet's mockery would have been unmeaning had there been no basis for it in fact." (Carpenter: *Theism in Medieval India*, pp. 111-112.) Here were the conditions, for which one need not go to the reign of the Pāla kings of Beṅgāl.

There is positive evidence also to the effect that a philosophy like that of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* existed in India before the time of Śaṅkara and Gauḍa-pāda and it is hoped that further research on the subject will make Prof. Dāsa-gupta change his opinion: "I do not know of any Hindu writer previous to Gauḍa-pāda who attempted to give an exposition of the monistic doctrine (apart from the *Upaniṣads*), either by writing a commentary as did Śaṅkara, or by writing an independent work as did Gauḍa-pāda. (Dāsa-gupta: *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 422.) If there did not exist such a monistic philosophy before the time of Gauḍa-pāda, whence has Bhava-bhūti learnt the views alluded to in the *Uttara-Rāma-carita* (III, 47; VI, 6)? The term *vivartita* is found neither in the *Upaniṣads* nor in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Gauḍa-pāda too does not seem to have used it. Bhava-bhūti could not have borrowed it from Śaṅkara, as modern scholars (*Vide*, Bhāṇḍārkar: Introduction to the *Malati-madhava*) place him at the end of the 7th century A. D. (*i.e.*, before the time of Śaṅkara.) The word *vivartita* surely occurs in the first verse of



Bhartṛ-hari's *Vākya-paṭīya* (Benares Samskṛt Series, No. 11), whose relation to the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* we shall presently see; but all that Bhava-bhūti says in this connection by way of a simile occurs in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in several places. A careful comparison of the lines of Bhava-bhūti with the parallel ones from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (*Vide*, Appendix III to this Chapter) and general acquaintance with the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* will leave no doubt as to which of the two is the borrower. We have no hesitation in thinking that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* must have existed in the time of the great poet Bhava-bhūti, if not earlier.

This belief is very much strengthened by a comparative study of the *Vairagya-sataka* and the *Vākya-paṭīya* of Bhartṛ-hari and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. Appendix IV to this chapter will show how much Bhartṛ-hari has borrowed from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The first *śloka* of the *Vairagya-sataka* is in imitation of III, 10, 33 and III, 10, 41 of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (Nirṇayasāgar Press edition). This *śloka* occurs in exactly identical form at the beginning of the Manuscript of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* found in the Library of His Highness the Mahā-rāja of Bikaner (*Vide*, Mitra: *A Catalogue of Samskṛt MSS. in the Library of the Mahārāja of Bikaner*, MS. No. 1216), and of the *Nirvāṇa-sthiti*, an extract from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. (*Vide*, Mitra: *Notices of Samskṛt MSS.*, Vol. IX, p. 283, MS. No. 3208.) It cannot be a mere chance coincidence. The whole of the *Vairagya-sataka* appears to be an imitation of the *Vairagya-prakarṇa* of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and has other *ślokas* either identical with or written in imitation of the corresponding *ślokas* of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. (*Vide*, Appendix IV.) Not only in the *Vairagya-sataka*, but also in the *Vākya-paṭīya* which is the systematic philosophical work of Bhartṛ-hari, we find much that appears to be borrowed from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (*Vide*, Appendix IV). The *śloka* III, 4, 71 of the

*Vākya-padīya*, for example, is almost the same as the śloka V, 56, 35 of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The main reason to believe that Bhartṛ-hari is the borrower of the two is that his doctrine of "S'abda Brahman", which is the main thesis of the work, is unknown to the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It is a doctrine which could not but have been accepted and mentioned in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, if it were otherwise. The śloka in question, moreover, embodies one of the main doctrines of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* which contains countless such ślokas, but it occurs as a solitary and rare one in the *Vākya-padīya*. On these considerations we cannot but think that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is an earlier work than those of Bhartṛ-hari, who is said to have died in 650 A.D. (*Vide*, Max Muller: *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, p. 90; and Keith: *Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 118.) How much earlier, it is very difficult to settle. At any rate the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* must have, on these considerations, existed in the life-time of Bhartṛ-hari, i.e., at about the commencement of the 7th century.

Let us now turn our attention to the other side of the problem. Does the work really come from the pen of Vālmiki, the author of the *Ramāyaṇa*, as it is generally believed by the orthodox people? The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, in the form in which we have it now, as printed at the Nirṇayasāgar Press, Bombay, or as it is found existing in MS. in the India Office Library (*Vide*, Eggeling: *Catalogue*, Part IV, p. 772 ff. Nos. 2407-2414), cannot be a work of Vālmiki, for the following reasons:

(1) The first chapter of the current *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* indicates that it must have been written much later than Vālmiki's composition, even if there had existed any to form the nucleus of the present work. The contents of the first chapter are in brief the following: 'There



was a Brāhmaṇa, Sutiṣṇa by name. He had a philosophical doubt in his mind, and to get himself satisfied on the problem, he approached one Agasti. The latter, having answered his question said to him: "I will, in this connection, relate to you an old story which is as follows. Once Agni-veśya saw his son sitting idle, with a doubt in his mind as to whether the Vedic sacrifices or their renunciation led one to the final deliverance. In order to show him the right way he told his son the following story: Once a fairy named Suruci, while sitting on one of the peaks of the Himālayas, happened to see a messenger of Indra passing along that way. She asked him where he was coming from. In reply, the messenger told her that he came from the hermitage of the sage Vālmiki, whither he had escorted, by the command of his master, Indra, a king Ariṣṭa-nemi, who was desirous of knowing the way to liberation. The sage Vālmiki recited to him an old composition of his in which he recorded the teachings of Vasiṣṭha to his pupil Rāma-candra, and which was, immediately after its composition, recited to Bharadvāja. The messenger repeated to the fairy all that the sage had taught to the king." This looks like the traditional way in which many a *Purāṇa* begins, and in which also the *Mahā-bhārata* begins. Now, even if all that is said above is not a mere Paurāṇic fiction to give weight to the doctrines, and if there were really some composition of Vālmiki which might have formed a nucleus of the present *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, as appears from the above story, it is very difficult to say what its doctrines might really have been in their unadulterated form.

When we compare the first chapter of the Anusāsana Parvan of the *Mahā-bhārata* with the tenth sarga of the second prakaraṇa of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and the doctrine

of the *Yoga-vāsishtā*, "Superiority of Effort over Fate" (II, 5-9), we are led to believe that there may have existed, even before the composition of the present *Mahā-bhārata*, some such work which contained the Philosophy of Vasiṣṭha which he had learnt from Brahmā. In the *Mahā-bhārata* we read that one of the many questions that Yudhiṣṭhira put to Bhīṣma, when the latter was at his death-bed of arrows, was: "Which of the two, fate and effort, is superior?" (Anu. 1. 1.) Bhīṣma says in reply: "In this connection there is an old story of Vasiṣṭha and Brahmā, O Yudhiṣṭhira!" (Anu. 1, 2.) In the *Yoga-vāsishtā* (II, 10) Vasiṣṭha tells Rāma-candra that he learnt his philosophy from Brahmā. The views that are said to have been expounded by Brahmā to Vasiṣṭha on the problem raised by Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Mahā-bhārata*, are almost identical with the views of Vasiṣṭha given to Rāma-candra in the *Yoga-vāsishtā*. (II, 5-9.) All this shows that there might have been in existence even before the *Mahā-bhārata*, some work which incorporated the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, which might have formed the nucleus of the present *Yoga-vāsishtā*.

Nothing more than this can be said in favour of the orthodox opinion. For, the present *Yoga-vāsishtā* could not have been written before the spread of Buddhistic thought as presented by its various schools, such as the Mādhyamika and Vijñānavāda, not only because a direct mention by names is made of them in V, 87, 18-20 and III, 5, 6, etc., of the *Yoga-vāsishtā*, but also because their doctrines of Idealism, Nihilism, Yoga-bhūmīkāś, etc., are very nicely and irremovably incorporated in the doctrines of Vasiṣṭha, whose philosophy on the whole is a fine synthesis of all that was best in the Upaniṣads, Sāṃkhya and Mahā-yāna Buddhism. A

reference to Buddhistic doctrines in the *Yoga-vāsishtā* can in no way be dismissed as mere interpolation, without losing much of what is best in the work. Prof. Bhaṭṭācārya has rightly pointed out (*Proceedings of the Oriental Conference*, Madras, p. 547) some reasons which prove that "there was an admixture of Buddhistic doctrines in the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsishtā*", as certainly it is as in the philosophy of Śaṅkara and Gauḍa-pāda also. There is thus hardly any doubt that the author of the *Yoga-vāsishtā* was acquainted with the philosophy of Buddhism in its later development into the Tathatā philosophy of Aśva-ghoṣa, the Sūnya-vāda of Nāgārjuna, and the Vijñāna-vāda of Asaṅga and Vasu-bandhu, before whom we cannot put the author of the *Yoga-vāsishtā*. Now, Nāgārjuna is placed by modern scholars in the "latter half of the second century". (*Vide*, Farquhar: *Religious Literature of India*, p. 116.) But Vasu-bandhu is placed by Takakusu between 420 and 500 A. D. (*Vide*, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1905, p. 1 ff.) The author of the *Yoga-vāsishtā*, therefore, could not have lived earlier than the close of the fifth century A. D.

(2) There is one more important evidence which points to the same conclusion. In VI b, 119, 2-5 of the *Yoga-vāsishtā* we come across the idea of a "Megha-dūta" (Cloud-messenger), where the whole theme of the poem, *Megha-dūta* of Kāli-dāsa is nicely summarised in three ślokaś. (*Vide* Appendix V to this chapter.) The date usually assigned to Kāli-dāsa by modern scholars is the early part of the fifth century A. D. (*Vide*, Smith: *Early History of India*, p. 321 and the note). The author of the *Yoga-vāsishtā* cannot, therefore, be placed before the middle of the fifth century A. D. He probably lived at the time of the down-fall of the glorious reign of the Gupta kings, which conclusion is borne out by the nature



of the philosophy of the work and by the description of the wars and battles in which the third and the sixth prakaraṇas of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* abound. The battle between Vidūratha and Sindhu in the third prakaraṇa, the invasions from all quarters on the kingdom of Vipas̥cit in the second half of the sixth prakaraṇa, and the mention of the Hūns in those places very plainly justify our conclusion. It was about that time that the Hūns had thrown India in the melting pot.

We have come to this conclusion about the probable date of the work—*before Bhartṛ-hari and after Kāli-dāsa*—on the ground mainly of its philosophical doctrines. There is, however, much in the work relating to the geography, topography, and history of the times when it might have been composed, which can help us in fixing an exact date of this important work, if competent scholars turn their attention towards it. For ourselves, we shall think it sufficient for our purpose, if we succeed in creating some interest in the study of this great book and its doctrines.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA*-LITERATURE

To think of any expository literature on the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, up to the commencement of the second quarter of the twentieth century A. D., when the present writer read his paper—"The Philosophy of Vasiṣṭha" before the Indian Philosophical Congress at its first session at Calcutta in December 1925, is to think of a hare's horn or of the son of a barren woman, to use *Vedantic* metaphors. There was hardly any book or paper existing in the English Language, in which any serious attempt had been made to study the philosophy or any other aspect of this wonderful work. Nor is there up to this time any good translation of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in English. Here we propose to point out what little literature is available at present on the work in English, Hindi, Urdu or Sanskrit:

#### A. ON THE PROBABLE DATE OF THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA*

1. A paragraph in *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur* (German) Vol. III, Page 443-444 of Dr. Winternitz.
2. A few lines in *An Outline of the Religious Literature of India*, by J. N. Farquhar, on page 228.
3. A paper entitled *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa, Its probable date and place of inception*, by Prof. Siva

Prasāda Bhaṭṭācārya, published in the *Proceedings and Transactions of the Third Oriental Conference*, Madras, 1924. Pages 545 ff.

4. Lecture II in B. L. Ātreya: *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and Its Philosophy*, Benares, 1932, "The Probable Date of Composition of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*".

5. A Paragraph in S. N. Dāsa-gupta's *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, "Philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*".

6. P. C. Divanji: "The Date and Place of Origin of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*", a paper read at the Baroda session of the Oriental Conference, 1933.

7. B. L. Ātreya: "The Probable Date of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*", a paper read at the Baroda session of the Oriental Conference, 1933.

#### B. LITERATURE DEALING WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

1. Lāla Baij Nāth: Introduction (Hindi) to the *Hindi Translation of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, published by Jñāna Sāgar Press, Bombay. It gives a brief analysis of the contents of all the six Prakaraṇas of the work.

2. K. Nārāyaṇasvāmi Aiyar: Introduction to his *English Translation of the Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, giving a very brief analysis of the contents of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

3. B. L. Ātreya: *Philosophy of Vasiṣṭha*, a paper read at the first session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Calcutta, 1925, published in the *Proceedings*.

4. B. L. Ātreya: *Divine Imaginism of Vasiṣṭha*, a paper read at the second session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Benares, 1926, published in the *Proceedings* of the session.



5. B. L. Ātreya: *Gauḍa-pāda and Vasiṣṭha, a Comparative Study of Their Philosophy*, a paper read at the third session of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Bombay, 1927.
6. B. L. Ātreya: *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and Its Philosophy*, Benares, 1932.
7. B. L. Ātreya: *Srī Vāsiṣṭha-darśana-sāra* (Hindi), Benares, 1933.
8. B. L. Ātreya: "Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and some of the Minor Upaniṣads", a paper published in the Prince of Wales Sarasvatī Bhavana Studies, Benares, 1933.
9. B. L. Ātreya: *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha and Modern Thought*, Benares, 1934.
10. B. L. Ātreya: *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha aur uske Sidhānta*, a series of Hindi articles contributed to the *Sanātana Dharma*, Benares.
11. B. L. Ātreya: *Srī Vāsiṣṭha-darśanam* (Sanskrit, with an Introduction in English), published in the Prince of Wales Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts, Benares, 1935.
12. S. N. Dāsa-gupta: "Philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*", a chapter in his *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II.
13. S. N. Dāsa-gupta: 5 pages on the Philosophy of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in *Indian Idealism*.
14. Kanahya Lal 'Master': *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*, a series of articles in the *Kalyāṇa* (Hindi), Gorakhpūr.
15. B. L. Ātreya: "Śiva-Śakti-vāda" in *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, an article published in the Śiva-number of the *Kalyāṇa*, Gorakhpūr.
16. B. L. Ātreya: "Yoga-vāsiṣṭha men Bhagavad-gītā" (Hindi), an article published in the Gītā-number of the *Kalyāṇa*, Gorakhpūr.
17. B. L. Ātreya: "Yoga in *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*" (Hindi), an article in the Yoga-number of the *Kalyāṇa*, Gorakhpūr.

## C. ON THE STORIES OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

1. Bhagavān Dās: *Mystic Experiences* or Tales of Yoga and Vedānta from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, published by the Indian Bookshop, Theosophical Society, Benares City, 1928. It contains only four Stories of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

## D. TRANSLATIONS

## I. English:

1. *English Translation of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Mahāramāyaṇa*, by Bihārī Lāla Mitra, complete in four volumes, Calcutta, 1891. It is a translation of the whole work, which is praiseworthy only as an effort, not as a translation. It is not reliable, being wrong at numberless places. It is altogether useless for a student of the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

2. *A Translation of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha (Laghu)*, by K. Nārāyaṇasvāmi Aiyar, Madras, 1896. It is more reliable than the above mentioned one. Unfortunately, it is a translation of the Summarised *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, and not of the whole work. It does not give the serial number of the verses translated and is wrong in many places.

## II. Hindi:

1. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Bhaṣaṭīka-sahita*, by Thākur Prasād Ācārya, published at the Jñāna Sāgar Press, Bombay, Saṁvat, 1960. This translation was done under the direction of the late Rai Bahadūr Lāla Baij Nāth. It contains the original Saṁskṛt Text as well as the Hindi translation of each śloka. It follows the interpretation of the text given by the Saṁskṛt commentator Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī, who has read the



ideas of the later Advaita Vedānta into the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. One, therefore, misses the real and original meaning of the text in many places, while reading this translation. Otherwise it is an excellent translation.

2. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Bhaṣa*, published at the Navalkishore Press, Lucknow, 1914, and also at the Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay. This translation has a long history behind it. More than 150 years ago, two sisters of the then Mahārāja of Patiala, Saheb Singh, were widowed. They requested one Sādhu Rāma Prasād Nirāñjani to read the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to them. He read the whole of it to them, translating it at the same time in the Pañjābi dialect, which was noted down *verbatim* by two reporters secretly appointed by the ladies for the purpose. The translation was later on published in the same dialect. The present publication is a corrected version of the same in Hindi. (*Vide*, Preface to it.) It is one of the most popular and widely read books on philosophy in Hindi. It does not contain the translation of some chapters of the original which are mere descriptions and are not of any philosophical interest. This translation appears to us to be quite a reliable rendering of the ideas of the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

3. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Bhaṣa—Vairāgya and Mumukṣu Prakaraṇas*, published at the Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay. It contains only the first two parts of the above mentioned translation, published probably for those who are not yet capable of understanding the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. These two *prakaraṇas* deal only with the temperament and qualities of the proper recipient of the doctrines of Vāsiṣṭha. This edition has become so popular that a copy of it may be found in almost every Hindu home in Northern India.

## III. Urdu:

1. *Yoga-vāsisūtha-sāra*, a translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsisūtha* by Munshi Surāj Nārāyaṇ Mehar, Delhi, 1913. It is quite a reliable and good translation of the famous summary of the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* made by Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kashmir in the 9th century A.D.

2. *Yoga-vāsisūthāyana*, by Sīva-vrata Lāl, Lahore. It is also a translation of the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsisūtha*. It is superior to the last mentioned one in that in it we find the contents of the paragraphs noted down in the margin which gives facility to the reader in knowing what topics are dealt with in the book. They also appear as contents in the beginning of the book. The last mentioned translation notes only the names of the stories, as is done in the original *Laghu-Yoga-vāsisūtha*.

## E. THE ORIGINAL SAMSKRIT TEXT

I. *Complete with the Commentary of Ānanda-bodhendra:*

1. Published at the Gaṇapata Kṛṣṇaji Press, Bombay, in Sāhvat 1936, Vikrama. It was published in *patra* form (i.e., unbound leaves). Its verses are not separated from one another in the proper fashion, and therefore it is very inconvenient to read it.

2. Published at the Nirṇayasāgar Press, Bombay in 1918. It is in two volumes, edited by Vāsudeva Lakṣmaṇa Sāstri Pansikar, which bear the title of *The Yoga-vāsisūtha of Vālmiki with the Commentary Vāsisūtharāmāyana-tātparya-prakāśa*. It is the completest available text. But it contains only 27,687 stanzas, whereas the tradition is that the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* contained thirty-two thousand stanzas. This edition agrees much with the MS. work existing in the India Office Library. (*Vide*, Eggeling; *Catalogue*, London, 1887, Part IV, pages 772 ff.)

The commentator is named in the commentary as Ananda-bodhendra Sarasvatī Bhikṣu, disciple of Gaṅgādhara-  
rendra Sarasvatī Bhikṣu, who was the disciple of Sarvajña  
Sarasvatī. The commentator reads and comments on the  
work in the light of the Advaita Vedānta of later times.  
This edition has been printed in the best available style.  
We have followed this text in the present work.

## II. *The abridged editions:*

1. *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, by Gauḍa Abhinanda, published at the Nirṇayasāgar Press, Bombay, in Saṁvat 1644, in unbound leaves. The first three prakaraṇas of the work, namely, the Vairāgya, Mumukṣu-vyavahāra and Utpatti, have on them the Commentary *Vāsiṣṭha-candrika* of Ātmasukha, and the last three, namely, the Sthiti, Upasāma and Nirvāṇa prakaraṇas, have on them the Commentary, *Samsāra-tāriṇī* of Mummaḍi-deva. This summary does not contain anything from the second half of the sixth prakaraṇa of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

2. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*, a short compendium of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, by an anonymous author, in 10 chapters, containing about 200 verses in all, published by the Lakṣmī Nārāyaṇa Press, Moradabad. It seems to be the same as the MS. described by Aufrecht in his *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae* under No. 564. (See also No. 563.)

3. *The Maha-Upaniṣad*, an *Upaniṣad* which is a summary of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in 535 verses. It is published along with other *Upaniṣads* in the Nirṇayasāgar Press Edition of the 108 *Upaniṣads* and in the *Minor Upaniṣads* Series of the Adyar Press.

4. *The Anna-pūrṇa Upaniṣad*. It is another collection of 337 verses from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, published as above.



5. *The Akṣi Upaniṣad*, an abridgment of the section on the "Seven Stages of Yoga in the Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa (Via. 126) of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* published as above.

6. *The Muktiḥ Upaniṣad*, Chapter II, a collection of verses from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* on Vāsanā-tyāga (renunciation of desires), published as above.

7. *The Vārāha Upaniṣad*, Chapter IV, a collection of verses from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* on the stages of Yoga and the character of the liberated living man, published as above. (*Vide*, Chap. IV of this part.)

8. The *Vāsiṣṭha-darśana* (in about 2500 śloka), by B. L. Ātreya, published in the Prince of Wales Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts of the U. P. Government. It is the best and the most comprehensive summary of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* so far as its philosophy is concerned. (See Chapter V.)

## F. MANUSCRIPTS OF THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA AND ITS ABRIDGMENTS

### 1. *Of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* :

(a) In the India Office Library, London, described by Julius Eggeling in the *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office*, London, Part IV, pages 772 ff.

The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* with the *Vāsiṣṭha-tātparya-prakāśa* of Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī (Nos. 2407-2414 of the *Catalogue*). It consists of the following parts :

(1) *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa* (No. 302a) which is in 33 sargas with about 1130 śloka. It may also be noted that the printed Edition of the Nirṇayasāgar Press, Bombay, has also its *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa* in 33 sargas consisting of 1176 śloka. (2) *Mumukṣu-vyavahāra-prakaraṇa*, in 20 sargas with nearly 6000 śloka. The Nirṇayasāgar Edition of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* also has its



Mumukṣu-vyavahāra-prakarāṇa in 20 sargas of 807 ślokaś. (3) *Utpatti-prakarāṇa* in 122 sargas with nearly 6000 ślokaś. The Nirṇayasāgar Edition has it in 122 sargas with 5295 ślokaś. (4) *Sthiti-prakarāṇa* in 62 sargas with "about 2400 couplets". The Nirṇayasāgar Edition has it also in 62 sargas of 2415 stanzas. (5) *Upastama-prakarāṇa*, in 93 sargas with about 4270 couplets. The Nirṇayasāgar Edition has it also in 93 sargas of 4167 stanzas. (6) *Nirvāṇa-prakarāṇasya Pūrvārdham*, in 129 sargas with about 5460 ślokaś. The Nirṇayasāgar Edition has it in 128 sargas with 5111 ślokaś. Eggeling also says with regard to the MS. (306) of this prakarāṇa "As the 111th sarga has no number, the MS. seems to have only 128 sargas". *Nirvāṇa-prakarāṇasya Uttarārdham* (in three MSS. 307, 308 and 309), in 216 sargas with about 880 ślokaś. The Nirṇayasāgar Edition also has it in 216 sargas with 8716 ślokaś.

There are other Manuscripts also (2415/2941; 2416-2420; 2421 and 2422), but they are incomplete.

(b) In the Bodleian Library Oxford :

*Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* or *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, described by Th. Aufrecht in *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum Bibliothecae Bodleianae* under No. 840. There is no Uttarārdha of the Nirvāṇa-prakarāṇa in this Manuscript. It begins with "Divi bhūmau," etc.

(c) In the Library of His Highness the Mahārāja of Bikaner described by Rājendra Lāla Mitra in *A Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of His Highness the Mahārāja of Bikaner* under No. 1216.

*Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Saṭika*. It begins with "Dik-kālādy-anāvachhinna", etc. It has no Uttarārdha of the Nirvāṇa-prakarāṇa.

(d) In the Library of His Highness the Mahārāja of Alwar, described by Peterson in *the Catalogue of*

*Alwar Manuscripts* (Nos. 548 and 549): "*Yoga-vāsiṣṭha Ārṣa-rāmāyaṇa, Jñāna-vāsiṣṭha, Mahā-rāmāyaṇa, Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* or *Vāsiṣṭha*" with the commentary of Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī.

(e) In the Queen's Sanskrit College Library, Benares: There are about 6 Manuscripts of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* (*Vide, Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Sanskrit College Library* Nos. 1808, 1809, 1810, 1820 and 5037) out of which only one (No. 1820) seems to be complete.

(f) In the Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras: (*Vide, M. Raṅgācārya: A descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts, Vol. IV, Part I, Nos. 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, and 1914.*)

1. *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇam* Savyākhyānam. The text is accompanied with the commentary of Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī, in Deva-nāgarī script, containing only the Sthiti, Vairāgya and Mumukṣu Prakaraṇas. (No. 1910.)

2. *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇam* Savyākhyānam (No. 1911) in Grantha character. The Upaśama Prakaraṇa not complete.

3. *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇam* Savyākhyānam (No. 1912) in 570 pages of Devanāgarī script. This MS. comes up to the 122nd sarga of the Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa.

4. *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇam* Savyākhyānam, from the Adhyāya 39th of the Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa to the end, in Deva-nāgarī script with the commentary of Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī. (No. 1913.)

(g) In the Oriental Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal: (*Vide, Kuñj Behāri: Catalogue, Calcutta, 1904, p. 156.*)

1. *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* with the commentary of Ānanda-bodhendra Sarasvatī, in Bengālī character: Upaśama Prakaraṇa (I. B. 38, I. B. 80), Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa (I. B. 30, I. G. 102), Vairāgya and Mumukṣu Prakaraṇas (I. B. 19), Sthiti Prakaraṇa (I. B. 37).

2. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-ṭīkā* (Vāsiṣṭha-pada-dīpikā) by Advayāranya in Deva-nāgarī character. (No. III. E. 62.)

(h) There is another Manuscript of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* described by Rājendra Lāla Mitra in the *Notices of Sanskrit MSS.*, Calcutta, 1880, under No. 2043:

*Mahā-rāmāyaṇa* or *Vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa* with the commentary *Vāsiṣṭha-tātparyā-prakāśa* in 75,000 ślokaś, in Nāgarī character. It begins with "Yataḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni, etc.", and ends with "Yat sarvaṁ khalv idam", etc.

## II. Manuscripts of the Abridgments:

1. *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra* or *Mokṣo-pāya-sāra*:

(a) The India Office Library: See Eggeling: *Catalogue*, Part IV, under Nos. 2424/2120 and 2425/1342.

(b) In the Bodleian Library—*Vide*, Keith: *Catalogue*, Appendix, under No. 840 (MS. Fraser 6). It is an abridgment of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* by Abhinanda. Keith says: "Abhinanda's great-great-grand-father flourished under Muk-tāpīḍa of Kashmir (about A. D. 724). The poet was born in Kashmir, but wrote in Gauḍa for Yuvarāja Hara-varṣa, son of Vikrama-sīla. See Peterson: *Subhāṣitavalī*, p. 97".

(c) In the Ālwar Library—See No. 550 of Peterson: *Catalogue*.

(d) In the Sanskrit College Library, Benares—See Hall: *A Contribution towards an index to the Bibliography of Indian Philosophical systems*, Vedānta Philosophy, No. CXLIV. An abridgment of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, "by Abhinanda of Kashmir". The copy contains a commentary (No. CXLV), *Samsāra-tāriṇī*.

(e) In the Govt. Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras—*Vide* Raṅgācārya: *Catalogue* Nos. 1892, 1893, 1894, and 1895. It is called *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as well as *Jñāna-vāsiṣṭha*. "This is an epitome in 44 sargas of



the big *Vasiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa*. The name of the compiler is given as "Kashmir Paṇḍit". Telugu script.

2. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*, an epitome of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* by an anonymous author, with or without the commentary of Mahī-dhara of Benares:

(a) In the India Office Library—Eggeling: *Catalogue*, Part IV, No. 2426/2532 F. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*. "A short compendium of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa*, in ten prakaraṇas with about 220 couplets." It begins with "Dikkālādi-anavacchinna-ananta-cinmātra-mūrtaye." Nos. 2428/1521, 2428/1364c, and 2429/2436 are copies of *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra-vivṛti*, or *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra-vivarāṇa*, that is, the epitome with a commentary composed by Mahī-dhara, at Benares, in Saṃvat 1654 (A.D. 1597).

(b) In the Bodleian Library—See Winternitz and Keith: *Catalogue of MS.* No. 1302, and Aufrecht: *Catalogi Codicum Manuscriptorum*, No. 563. This MS. also contains the commentary of Mahī-dhara. It consists of 10 chapters: (i) Vairāgya (27 verses); (ii) Jīvan-mukta-lakṣaṇa (25); (iii) Mano-laya (27); (iv) Jīvan-mukti-phalaka-tattva-jñāna; (v) Vāsanopasaṃsa; (vi) Ātma-manana (10); (vii) Suddhi-nirūpaṇa (15); (viii) Ātmārcaṇa (10); (ix) Ātma-nirūpaṇa (32); and (x) Jīvan-mukti-nirūpaṇa (34).

(c) In the Benares Saṃskṛt College Library—*Vide*, Hall: *Index*, p. 121, Nos. CXVI and CXVII.

(d) In the Oriental Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengāl. See Kuñj Behāri: *Catalogue*, No. I. G. 25. It is *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra*, (Saṭika), commented by Mahī-dhara in Bengālī character.

(e) It is also described by Rājendra Lāla Mitra in the *Notices of Saṃskṛt MSS.*, Calcutta, 1880, under No. CCCXL of Vol. I, p. 192. It begins with

"Dik-kālādy-anavacchinnānanta-cinmātra-mūrtaye,  
Svānubhūty-eka-mānāya namaḥ śāntāya tejase."



3. *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra-saṁgraha*

It is a collection of about 2300 ślokaś from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, by Mādhavācārya existing in the Samskr̥t College Library, Benares (*Vide Catalogue* No. 1807/70). See Hall: *Index*, p. 121. No. CXLVIII.

4. *Jñāna-vāsiṣṭha-samuccaya*

It is an epitome in 700 ślokaś of the abridged *Jñāna-vāsiṣṭha* (*Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*) by Kṛṣṇayya, existing in Telugu Script in the Govt. Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras. See Raṅgācārya: *Catalogue*, Vol. IV, Part I, No. 1988.

5. *Nirvāṇa-sthiti*

It is an extract from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa*, dealing with final release and the means thereof, in 304 ślokaś, described by Mitra in the *Notices*, Vol. IX, p. 283, under No. 3208.

6. *Nanā-prasṅgātmaḥ Khila Mokṣopayaḥ*

It is a supplement to the *Nirvāṇa-prakarṇa* existing in the India Office Library. (See Eggeling: *Catalogue*, Part IV, No. 2423/2442b.) It is in 14 sargas of 550 ślokaś in all.

## G. A PERSIAN TRANSLATION OF "LAGHU-YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA":

(In Manuscript)

It is also interesting to note that *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is also one of those Samskr̥t books which were got translated into Persian by Darah Shikoh. A copy of it exists in the Malatisadan Library, Benares. It is in 126 leaves of big size. It was copied on the 9th of Śrāvaṇa month of the Sahr̥vat, 1855, by Lāla Kunvara-singh of Benares. Its Persian is very beautiful and sweet.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE *YOGA-VĀSISŪTHA* AND SOME OF THE MINOR *UPANIṢADS*

THE greatness of the *Yoga-vāsisūtha* and the authority that it enjoyed in the medieval thought of India will be evident when a thorough search is made of the source of many of the *Minor Upaniṣads*. Then, it will be discovered that a number of the *Minor Upaniṣads* take their material wholly or partially, very often *verbatim*, from the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*. Unlike the present times, when it is almost impossible to misappropriate from another author, in old times, when books were very rare, especially huge ones like the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*, people could very easily copy portions from some work without acknowledgment and pass them as new and original compositions. This, we think, has been done with the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*. It is very difficult to find out what has been borrowed from such a huge work, when there is no index of the work available. We have, however, been able to discover the source of the whole or parts of many a *Minor Upaniṣad* in the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*. The following is the general account which is supported by detailed tables of the identical *ślokas*.

Almost all the six chapters of the *Mahā-Upaniṣad* except the first which is in prose; all the five chapters but the introductory portion of the *Anna-pūrṇa Upaniṣad*,

almost the whole of the *Akṣi Upaniṣad*, the second, which is the main, chapter of the *Muktikopaniṣad*, the fourth chapter of the *Varahopaniṣad*, 50 ślokas of the *Bṛhat-saṁnyāsopaniṣad*, 18 ślokas of the *Saṁdilyopaniṣad*, 10 ślokas of the *Yājñavalkyopaniṣad*, 3 ślokas of the *Yoga-kundali-upaniṣad*, and probably one śloka of the *Paingalopaniṣad*, seem to have been taken *verbatim* from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as would appear from the following tables.

The main reasons, why we should think that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is not the borrower from these *Upaniṣads*, are the following:

1. In these *Upaniṣads* there are many ślokas which are common to several of them, but which occur in different contexts in the *Upaniṣads* and sometimes in unsuitable contexts, whereas in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* they occur in their proper places. Some of the same ślokas of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* occurring in many *Minor Upaniṣads* are shown in the following table:

<i>The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i>	<i>The Minor Upaniṣads</i>	
	<i>Mahā</i>	<i>Anna-pūrṇa</i>
V. 74. 33,36.	II. 47.	II. 25,26.
V. 91. 81.	II. 48.	IV. 69.
V. 59. 32.	IV. 10.	I. 47.
III. 7. 10.	IV. 82.	IV. 31.
	<i>Muktika</i>	
V. 90. 4.	II. 32.	IV. 14.
V. 90. 16.	II. 34. (half)	IV. 16.
V. 90. 18.	II. 34. (half)	IV. 17.
V. 90. 20.	II. 35. (half)	IV. 18.
V. 90. 23.	II. 35. (half)	IV. 19.
V. 91. 37.	II. 29.	IV. 48.
V. 91. 14.	II. 48.	IV. 41.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha**The Minor Upaniṣads**Muktika**Anna-pūrṇā*

V. 91. 29.

II. 57.

IV. 46.

V. 92. 17.

II. 10.

IV. 83.

V. 92. 22.

II. 13.

IV. 84.

V. 92. 34.

II. 43.

IV. 90.

*Mahā**Varāha*

III. 118. 5—15.

V. 24—34.

IV. 1—10.

*Maitreyī*

III. 117. 9.

V. 6.

II. 30. *Yoga-kundali*

III. 9. 47.

II. 65.

I. 10. III. 24. 25.

*Muktika**Paingala*

III. 9. 14.

II. 76.

II. 63.

III. 11.

III. 34.

IV. 23. 58.

II. 42.

V. 75.

*Yajñavalkya*

I. 21. 1,2,5,6,

III. 39—48.

5—15.

11,12,18,

20,23,35.

IV. 24. 8.—10. II. 40,41. V. 77—78.

IV. 35. 18. II. 39. V. 97—98.

*Varāha**Akṣi*

VIa. 126. 60—67

IV. 12—17.

31—39.

2. The ślokas found in the *Upaniṣads* are apparently selections made from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, because the places from which they are selected abound in many more ślokas of the same theme.

3. The philosophy expounded in all of these *Upaniṣads* is one or the other aspect of the philosophy



of Vasiṣṭha which is not completely represented even in all of them taken together.

4. No attempt is made in the *Upaniṣads* to rearrange the *śloka*s in a systematic order. Very often they occur in the order of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* which is made worse by the fact that the *śloka*s are not found in their proper context.

5. Almost all these *Upaniṣads* lack in the character of being very old. None of them probably existed before the time of Śaṅkara, whereas it seems that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is a pre-Śaṅkara work.

6. Some of the *śloka*s of these *Upaniṣads* are not found in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in identically the same form, but, curiously, they occur in that very form in the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which shows that either the authors of these *Upaniṣads* have used this summary of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* or some other version of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* different from the available one, from which the *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* was selected.

### *The Mahā Upaniṣad*

This *Upaniṣad* is a big *Upaniṣad* divided in six chapters or *Adhyāyas*. The first *Adhyāya* is in prose. The other five are in 535 *śloka*s, almost all of which are from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, the following of which we have been able to identify in it.

#### *The Mahā Upaniṣad*

#### *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

II. 1, 2.	II. 1. 8, 10.
II. 3, 5.	III. 80. 4, 7.
II. 9, 10, 11.	III. 81. 2, 3, 3.
II. 13—35.	II. 1. 11—34.
II. 37.	I. 3. 16.
II. 37—40.	I. 3. 6, 8, 15.

<i>The Mahā Upaniṣad</i>		<i>The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i>
II. 41, 42.	II.	2. 5, 8.
II. 43—46.	V.	16. 18, 21, 11, 19.
II. 47.	V.	74. 33, 36; V. 75. 52.
II. 48.	V.	91. 81.
II. 49—60.	VIa.	115. 12, 13, 15, 37, 38, 28, 25, 33, 16, 34, 20, 21.
II. 61—69.	III.	9. 12—15, 47—50, 75.
II. 70—77.	II.	1. 35—37, 41—45.
III. 1—7.	I.	12. 4, 5, 7—9, 16, 21, 26.
III. 8.	I.	13. 1.
III. 9—15.	I.	14. 1, 2, 5, 10—13.
III. 16, 17.	I.	15. 3, 9.
III. 18—21.	I.	16. 2, 15, 24, 25.
III. 22—25.	I.	17. 8, 29, 31, 32.
III. 26—32.	I.	18. 4, 4, 18, 19, 31, 38, 61.
III. 33.	I.	19. 30.
III. 34.	I.	20. 3.
III. 35, 36.	I.	22. 6, 8.
III. 37, 38.	I.	23. 3, 19.
III. 39—48.	I.	21. 1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 18, 20, 23, 35.
III. 49—51.	I.	26. 23, 25, 29.
III. 52—54.	I.	28. 21, 31, 35.
III. 55.	I.	29. 13.
III. 56.	<i>The Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> , I. 165	
III. 57.	A summary of several ślokas.	
	Compare I.	31. 24.
IV. 2—4.	II.	11. 59, 61, 67.
IV. 5.	II.	13. 11.
IV. 6.	V.	50. 17.
IV. 7, 8.	V.	56. 15, 21.

*The Maha Upaniṣad**The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

IV. 9.	V.	57.	22.
IV. 10.	V.	59.	32.
IV. 11, 12.	V.	62.	6, 8.
IV. 13—15.	IV.	56.	30, 31, 33.
IV. 17—23.	IV.	61.	1—3, 5—7, 12—14, 16.
IV. 24.	V.	13.	20.
IV. 26.	II.	12.	16, 17.
IV. 28—34.	III.	13.	38—40, 61, 62, 72, 75, 81.
IV. 35—37.	II.	15.	3, 6, 12.
IV. 38.	II.	18.	26.
IV. 39.	II.	19.	9, 10, 11.
IV. 42, 43.	II.	19.	29, 31.
IV. 44—49.	III.	1.	10, 12, 17, 19, 22, 23.
IV. 50.	III.	3.	25.
IV. 51, 52.	III.	4.	39, 42—44.
IV. 53, 54.	III.	4.	44, 58.
IV. 55, 57.	III.	5.	3—5.
IV. 58, 60.	III.	17.	10, 12, 13.
IV. 61—63.	III.	22.	36, 29, 31.
IV. 64, 65.	III.	20.	9, 10.
IV. 66.	III.	84.	36.
IV. 67.	III.	89.	3.
IV. 68.	III.	103.	14.
IV. 82.	III.	7.	10.
IV. 87.	III.	109.	25.
IV. 88—98.	III.	111.	1, 2, 8, 12, 15, 19, 20, 22, 33, 35, 36, 40, 42.
IV. 99—111.	III.	112.	5, 6, 7, 11, 16, 17, 19—25.
IV. 112.	III.	113.	2.

<i>The Mahā Upaniṣad</i>	<i>The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i>
IV. 113—132.	III. 114. 3—5, 7, 8, 12, 14, 15, 16—18, 23, 29, 31, 34, 51, 53, 60, 61, 75, 76.
IV. 133.	III. 115. 4-5.
V. 1—20.	III. 117. 2, 5—19, 21—23, 25.
V. 21—40.	III. 118. 1—3, 5—19, 21—23.
V. 41, 42.	A summary of III. 118. 28—30. Found exactly as III. 13. 130 of <i>The Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> .
V. 43.	<i>The Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> , III. 13. 132, 133.
V. 44—46.	III. 119. 21—23.
V. 48—51.	III. 121. 53—56, 68.
V. 52, 53.	III. 122. 54, 53.
V. 54.	IV. 1. 3.
V. 55—58.	Missing from the <i>Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> , but found in the <i>Laghu-Yoga- vāsiṣṭha</i> as IV. 14. 2, 4—6.
V. 59.	IV. 14. 43.
V. 60, 61.	IV. 15. 21, 25.
V. 62—69.	IV. 22. 1—3, 7—10, 32.
V. 70—75.	IV. 23. 44, 41, 43, 56—58.
V. 76—82, 84.	IV. 24. 1, 8—14, 18, 19.
V. 85, 86.	IV. 27. 25, 35.
V. 88.	IV. 16. 7, of the <i>Laghu- Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> .
V. 89—95.	IV. 33. 50—57, 59.
V. 96, 97.	IV. 35. 3, 18.
V. 98.	IV. 17. 6, of the <i>Laghu- Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> .



<i>The Māhā Upaniṣad</i>		<i>The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i>
V. 99—103.	IV. 35.	3, 7, 8, 14, 15.
V. 104—107.	IV. 39.	23—25, 43.
V. 108—112, 114, 117.	IV. 41.	4, 13—15, 20, 32.
V. 113.	IV. 17.	40, of the <i>Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> .
V. 118—135.	IV. 42.	11, 13—16, 21, 23—26, 31, 34, 36—38, 44, 45, 50.
V. 136—143.	IV. 43.	1, 2, 5, 9—12, 22, 25, 30.
V. 144—164.	IV. 44.	14—28, 30, 31, 42—49.
V. 165, 166.	IV. 45.	14, 25, 26.
V. 167—177.	IV. 46.	2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22, 26.
V. 178—185.	IV. 54.	2—5, 12, 13, 18, 22, 37, 38.
VI. 1—5.	IV. 56.	25, 34, 37, 41—44.
VI. 6—9.	IV. 57.	22—25, 29, 37.
VI. 10.	IV. 58.	7, 40.
VI. 11.	IV. 18.	40, of the <i>Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i> .
VI. 12—15.	V. 5.	39, 43, 51.
VI. 16.	V. 6.	8.
VI. 17—21.	V. 8.	9—11, 13, 17.
VI. 22—27.	V. 9.	25, 33, 36, 41, 44, 52, 60.
VI. 28—34.	V. 13.	21, 28, 39, 32, 33, 35, 38.
VI. 35—38.	V. 14.	46, 48, 50, 52.
VI. 39, 40.	V. 15.	23, 24, 27.

*The Mahā Upaniṣad*

VI. 41—49.	V. 16.	7—12, 15, 18—21.
VI. 50—62.	V. 17.	5, 7, 9, 13—17, 19, 20, 22, 27.
VI. 63—71.	V. 18.	5—9, 17, 18, 22, 24, 19, 21, 61.
VI. 72.	V. 18.	61, and V. 20. 37.
VI. 73—76.	V. 21.	2, 8, 11, 15.
VI. 76.	V. 22.	33.
VI. 77, 78.	V. 26.	13, 14.
VI. 79—82.	V. 27.	2, 20, 25, 32, 33

*The Anna-pūrṇā Upaniṣad*

This Upaniṣad, consists of 337 śloka. Except the first 17 śloka, almost the whole of it is taken from books V and VIa of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. Here is the detailed study :

*The Anna-pūrṇā Upaniṣad**The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

I. 18-19.	VIa. 115.	1, 40.
I. 20—22.	VIa. 117.	9, 10, 11.
I. 23—26.	V. 55.	2, 3, 7, 8.
I. 28—39.	V. 56.	7, 17—19, 30, 31, 33, 34, 43, 49, 55, 56.
I. 40—46.	V. 58.	32, 33, 39, 41, 44, 47.
I. 47.	V. 59.	32.
I. 48—50.	V. 62.	9—11.
I. 51, 52.	V. 64.	49—51.

*The Anna-pūrṇa**Upaniṣad*

- I. 53.  
I. 54, 55.  
I. 56, 57.  
II. 1—7.  
II. 8—11.  
II. 12—16.  
II. 17.  
II. 18.  
II. 20—22.

- II. 23.  
II. 24—26.  
II. 27.  
II. 28—31.  
II. 32, 33.  
II. 34—44.

- III. 4—9.

- III. 9, 10.  
III. 10, 11.  
III. 11, 12.  
III. 13—24.

- IV. 1—8.

- IV. 9.

- IV. 11.

- IV. 12—24.

V.

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*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

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55, 54.

33, 42.

1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.

2, 7—11.

12, 26, 31—33.

56.

36.

40, 41, 33, 43,  
44.

35, 36.

9, 10, 33, 35.

52.

7, 13, 14—16.

46, 49.

2, 8—13, 15—17,  
20.9, 11, 12, 15, 16,  
21, 23.

43, 44.

3.

3, 5, 6.

3, 7, 11—16, 18,  
19, 21—24.9, 12—14, 23, 27,  
31—33.\*66 of the *Laghu-  
Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

63.

12, 14, 4, 5, 16,  
18, 20, 23—28,  
30, 31.

*The Anna-pūrṇā  
Upaniṣad**The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

IV. 31.	III.	7.	10.
IV. 39—72.	V.	91.	8, 10, 14, 15, 20, 21, 26, 27, 29, 36, 37, 39, 42, 43, 46, 47, 66, 74—77, 81 —87, 102, 105, 108, 110, 111— 113, 112.
IV. 73—91.	V.	92.	2—6, 9, 11—17, 22, 25—27, 29, 30, 32, 34, 49, 50.
V. 1—7.	V.	93.	15, 55, 56, 82, 84, 85, 91.
V. 8—13.	Vīa.	2.	24—26, 31, 46, 56.
V. 14.	Vīa.	4.	4.
V. 15—19.	Vīa.	10.	14, 20—22, 44.
V. 20, 22, 23.	Vīa.	11.	17, 77, 99.
V. 24.	Vīa.	12.	2.
V. 25—32.	Vīa.	25.	3—5, 7, 34, 63, 67, 68.
V. 33, 34.	Vīa.	28.	47, 68.
V. 35, 36.	Vīa.	29.	67, 134.
V. 37—46.	Vīa.	44.	2, 10, 14, 16—18, 24—26, 30.
V. 47, 48.	V.	53.	19, 22.
V. 49—53.	Vīa.	69.	18—20, 40, 45, 47.
V. 55, 56.	Vīa.	78.	32—34.
V. 57—60.	Vīa.	26.	8, 12, 14, 16, 20.
V. 62.	Vīa.	25.	26.
V. 63.	Vīa.	93.	44.



*The Anna-pūrṇa  
Upaniṣad*

- V. 65, 66.  
V. 67.  
V. 68.  
V. 69.  
V. 70.  
V. 71.  
V. 81—95.  
V. 96—101.  
V. 102—106.  
V. 107—111.  
V. 112—118.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

- VIa. 111. 36, 40.  
VIa. 113. 20.  
VIa. 117. 14.  
VIa. 118. 7.  
VIa. 119. 8.  
VIa. 120. 1.  
VIa. 120. 1—10, 12—16, 22.  
VIa. 122. 4—8, 11.  
VIa. 123. 6—8, 10, 11.  
VIa. 124. 23—27.  
VIa. 125. 1, 2, 4—8.

*The Muktikopaniṣad*

The second *Adhyāya* consisting of about 76 *śloka*s, which is the main portion of the *Upaniṣad* has been taken from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It acknowledges its indebtedness when it begins these *śloka*s with the words: "atra *śloka* bhavanti", but does not mention from where he takes these *śloka*s. All the *śloka*s collected here bear on desire and its control for the attainment of liberation. They are so unsystematically arranged that it is very difficult to find out their source in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. We have, however, succeeded in identifying most of them, as would appear from the following table:

*The Muktikopaniṣad*

- II. 1.  
II. 3—9.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

- II. 5. 4.  
II. 9. 25—27, 30—33,  
35, 38.

*The Muktikopaniṣad*

II. 10—14.	V.	92.	16, 17, 18, 22, 23.
II. 16, 17.	V.	34.	32, 28.
II. 18—21.	V.	57.	19, 26—28.
II. 25—27.	V.	91.	35, 48, 53, 54.
II. 29.	V.	91.	37.
II. 30, 31.	II.	9.	41, 42.
II. 32—35.	V.	90.	4, 11, 16, 18, 20, 23.
II. 36—38.	V.	9.	55, 56.
II. 39.	IV.	35.	18.
II. 40.	IV.	24.	8—10.
II. 42.	IV.	23.	58.
II. 43, 44.	V.	92.	33—35.
II. 45, 47.	V.	92.	36—39.
II. 48.	V.	91.	14.
II. 51—52.	VIa.	25.	8, 16, 17.
II. 57—60.	V.	91.	29—32.
II. 61, 62.	I.	3.	11, 12.
II. 68—71.	IV.	57.	19—22.
II. 76.	III.	9.	14.

*The Vārāhopaniṣad*

The fourth of the five Adhyāyas of this *Upaniṣad* contains about 30 ślokaś from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. They deal with the seven stages of Self-realization and the character of a liberated living man. They are identified as shown below :

*The Vārāhopaniṣad*

IV. 1—10.	III.	118.	5, 6, 8—15.
IV. 11—18.	VIa.	126.	52, 60—69.
IV. 21—27.	III.	9.	4, 6—9, 11, 13.

*The Akṣi Upaniṣad*

It is a small Upaniṣad dealing with the seven stages of Self-realization. It consists of about 50 ślokaś, of which 40 are found in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in a chapter which contains more of the same type.

*The Akṣi Upaniṣad*

2—41.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

Vīa. 126. 98, 99, 8—30,  
32, 33, 36, 38,  
41, 42, 58—68,  
70, 71.

*The Bṛhat-saṁnyāsoṇiṣad*

This Upaniṣad deals with Saṁnyāsa (renunciation). In its description of the Self-realization of a saṁnyāsin it utilises 47 ślokaś of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* picked up from several chapters, one line from here, one line from there, which makes it very difficult to identify them, as will appear from the following table:

*The Bṛhat-saṁnyāso-  
ṇiṣad*

13—57.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

V. 34. 9—20, 68, 69,  
100, 101, 104,  
112—114.  
V. 35. 4, 11, 38, 39, 77,  
78, 81.  
V. 39. 47, 48, 49.  
V. 40. 19.  
V. 42. 14, 15.  
V. 50. 21, 22, 29, 34,  
35, 39, 42.  
V. 51. 31, 33, 35.  
V. 53. 67, 75, 78, 79.

*Saṇḍilyopaniṣad*

This Upaniṣad selects 18 ślokas from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* on the control of the mind through the control of the vital airs.

*The Saṇḍilya Upaniṣad*

I. 7, 24—36.

V.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*78. 8, 15, 16, 18—21,  
25, 27—31, 39.*The Maitreyī Upaniṣad*

There seem to be several ślokas of this Upaniṣad identical with those of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. We could, however, identify only the following:

*The Maitreyī Upaniṣad*

I. 10.

II. 27.

II. 30.

III.

VIa.

III.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

9. 47.

126. 38, 39.

117. 9.

*The Yajñavalkyopaniṣad*

Out of the 24 ślokas of the Upaniṣad 10 are from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

*The Yajñavalkyopaniṣad*

5—14.

I.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*21. 1, 2, 5, 6, 11,  
12, 18, 20, 23, 35.*The Yoga-kundalī Upaniṣad*

There are only two ślokas identical with those of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in this Upaniṣad.

*The Yoga-kundalī  
Upaniṣad*

III. 24.

III. 34.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

III. 9. 47.

III. 9. 14.



*The Paiṅgala Upaniṣad*

So far we have been able to identify only one śloka of this Upaniṣad with one in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

*The Paiṅgala Upaniṣad*

III. 11.

*The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

III. 9. 14.

It may also be noted here that there are several others of the *Minor Upaniṣads*, in which although we have not yet been able to discover ślokas exactly identical with those of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, yet the theme and language are very much similar to those of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The following portions of these *Upaniṣads* can very well compare with similar portions of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

1. The section on Samādhi in the *Jabāla-darśano-paniṣad*.
2. Ślokas IV. 1—11 of the *Maitrayaṇi Upaniṣad*.
3. Ślokas 1—5, on the nature of the mind, in the *Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad*.
4. I. 34—37; I. 59-60; IV (whole); VI. 58, 59—64 of the *Yoga-sikhopaniṣad*.
5. V. 1—19 of the *Triṣura-tāpini Upaniṣad*.
6. The whole of the *Tejo-bindu Upaniṣad*.
7. II. 12—16 of the *Saubhāgya-lakṣmī Upaniṣad*.

N. B.—In the comparison of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and the *Minor Upaniṣads* (*One Hundred and Eight Upaniṣads*) we have used the Nirṇayasāgar Edition of both.

## CHAPTER V

### THE METHOD OF THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA* AND THE NEED FOR PROPER ABRIDGMENT

THE main reason why the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* has not been recognised as a philosophical work is perhaps the manner in which it is written and the method which the author employs to impress his doctrines. One does not find in this work the terseness of Gauḍa-pāda, the hairsplitting quibbles of the Neo-Naiyāyikas, the authority-obsession of Sāṃkhya, and the stereotyped terminology of the later Sāṃkhya. Nor do we find any influence either of Dig-nāga or of Vātsyāyana on the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as he does not attempt to put his doctrines in the inferential form. He merely states in simple and unequivocal manner what he has to say and makes it clear by means of similes, analogies and illustrations, and impresses the truth of what he feels through stories. He hates obscurity, brevity, and vagueness. He knows that it is very difficult to make others realize that of which he has the direct intuition, and that it can be made intelligible only through illustrations and analogies. He avoids the method of abstract disquisition and dry argumentation, pursued perhaps by some of his predecessors like Nāgārjuna, which hopelessly failed to attract the notice of the people at large. He goes back to the method of the *Upaniṣads*, the *Mahā-bhārata* and the *Jātakas*, which carried the

truths advocated in them to the very heart of their readers. He also felt that works written in a sweet and literary style were more read and appreciated by the laity than books written in the cold philosophical style, and probably thought that the *kāvya* style might well be utilised for philosophy to make it popular and effective. This is what he might have thought while writing this work. He says in one place: "All that is expressed in sweet and graceful words, and with easily comprehensible arguments, similes and illustrations, goes directly to the heart of the hearer, and expands there, just as a little drop of oil expands on the surface of water; whereas all that is said without suitable illustrations and arguments intelligible to the hearer, in confused and obscure language, does not enter the heart of the hearer, and is a mere waste of words, like the butter poured on the burnt ashes of oblation. It is only through appropriate illustrations that subtle, yet worthy of being known, themes can be made popular in the world, as it has been done so in all the famous works." (III, 84, 45-47.)

Moved by such considerations and by the desire of making his philosophy popular, he yoked the literary art of story-telling to his philosophy which contained all that was best in Indian thought at the time he lived. How far he has succeeded in his effort, only those who are gifted with the double-fold genius in philosophy and literature can judge. We may only point out that the work has been a success, in so far as it has been ever since enjoying popularity in all circles of people, even though many do not understand the whole of its philosophy. The reader feels that he is in the living presence of a saintly personality, who is speaking from direct experience in a simple and beautiful style. He is his



own authority and does not bore the reader with quotation after quotation from the *Upaniṣads* and other authoritative texts and their commentaries, as is done in the later works of the Advaita philosophy. He has imbibed all that was best in the Indian philosophy that existed before him—Hindu, Buddhistic and Jaina—and speaks from his own standpoint, very often in words which might be mistaken as from other books and authors which he thoroughly imbibed and made his own. It is in this way that many expressions of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad-gītā* and some Buddhistic works can be identified in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

In his attempt to be clear and impressive, the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* has, however, committed the fault of too much repetition and sacrifice of a systematic arrangement of the contents of his work. The main division of the work into the six prakaraṇas or parts—Vairāgya (Dis-satisfaction), Mumukṣu-vyavahāra (the conduct of the aspirant), Utpatti (the creation of the world), Sthiti (the continuance of the world), Upasāma (Attainment of peace), and Nirvāṇa (the cessation of finite existence) has not even been kept fully in view. Everything is treated of in every prakaraṇa and also in many of the chapters of the prakaraṇas. No scientific or logical classification has been kept in view with regard to the topics dealt with. This defect of the work is very much felt by the modern reader who wants everything properly classified and exhaustively, but tersely, treated in its own place.

It is from this consideration and to save the time and energy of the present-day reader, who does not want to remain ignorant of the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, yet at the same time has no leisure to go through an unsystematic, but important, work of no less than 27,687



s'lokas that we have ventured to compile our *Vāsiṣṭha-Darśana* (published by the U. P. Government in its Prince of Wales Sarasvatī Bhavana Texts), in which we have collected extracts from the voluminous work, expounding almost all the aspects of the philosophy taught in the work, and classified them so as to present in a systematic form the tenets of the philosophy. The whole matter is taken from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* without any addition of even a single line, but the form in which it is arranged and the headings under which it is classified are ours, of course, in accordance with the textual matter. The chief thing that the reader will miss in our *Vāsiṣṭha-Darśana* is the stories, which we have deliberately excluded from our collection to win for Vasiṣṭha (or the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*) a worthy place in the world of philosophy, where the naked truth is more valued than the garb in which and the accompaniments with which, it appears.

There have been, in the long history of the existence of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, many attempts made to summarise the huge work into smaller ones, the nature of some of which may be noted here. The first such effort known to the students of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is the already mentioned *Laghu-Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of Gauḍa Abhinanda of Kashmir, who lived in the first half of the 9th century A.D. (*Vide*, Chapter II.) He selected 4,829 s'lokas (the tradition, however, says 6,000) from the original work in the serial order of it, and in the same six prakaraṇas gave a connected account of some of the doctrines and stories of the original work. This effort proved a great success in popularizing the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. But it also, like the original, lacks in a philosophically important system of arrangement. It also leaves some very important topics of the original. Moreover it stops at the end of the first

half of the last chapter and does not contain a summary of the other half of it. (It is probable that this portion did not exist at that time, or the summarizer might have left his work unfinished.)

Another attempt, and a better one from the philosophical and systematic point of view, was made by the unknown author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-sāra* (Compare Aufrecht: *Oxford Catalogue* MS. 563), who collected about 225 ślokaś from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, and classified them under the following heads: I. Dissipation; II. Unreality of the world; III. Character of the living liberated man; IV. Annihilation of the mind; V. Annihilation of desire; VI. Meditation on the Self; VII. Worship of the Self; VIII. Description of the Self; and IX. Liberation in life. It is a good attempt, but represents only a fraction of the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It also, as is evident, lacks in a sound system of classification.

Other attempts to present the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* by way of summary, hardly known as such to most people, are the *Mahopaniṣad* and the *Annappūropaniṣad*, each of which present many aspects of the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in 535 and 337 ślokaś respectively. It is a pity that they do not anywhere mention that these ślokaś are taken from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. Both these selections are defective in so far as they lack a good and scientific order of arrangement of the material they have selected. They do not, even when combined together, present the whole philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

In the same manner the author of the *Muktikopaniṣad* has collected a number of ślokaś from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* bearing on desire and its renunciation in the second chapter of the Upaniṣad; and the author of the *Varāhopaniṣad* has collected in its fourth chapter some ślokaś on the "seven stages of the yoga" and

the "conduct of the living liberated man". Again, some *śloka*s from a chapter on "the stages of the yoga" have been picked up from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and made into a separate *Akṣi-upaniṣad*. All these collections of some of the views of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* are unsatisfactory, in so far as they do not give the whole philosophy of it.

Our *Vāsiṣṭha-Darśana* is the first attempt of its kind to present the entire philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* or *Vasiṣṭha* in a systematic form, inspired by the zeal of introducing a so-far-neglected, but important, system of thought to the modern scholars of Indian Thought.



## CHAPTER VI

### A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA*

THE author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* presents to us the doctrines that Rāma-candra, the hero of the *Ramāyaṇa*, is supposed to have been taught by his preceptor Vasiṣṭha. Rāma-candra, while still a boy, begins to reflect on the nature of things and finds them unsatisfactory, illogical, transitory and illusory. As a consequence, he is overpowered by pessimism. Rāma's father, having been informed of his son's mental condition, calls him in the presence of Vasiṣṭha, before whom Rāma-candra gives expression to his views thus: What use is there of our life here, when we are all born to die? Life is momentary and is fastly passing away. It is a doll in the hands of death. Our mind is so restless, that it never finds lasting repose in anything. Our desires are insatiate and always jump from one object to another. The body is an abode of disease and suffering. Childhood is beset with want of strength and wisdom. Youth, in itself evanescent, makes our minds polluted. In youth, we become slaves to the person of women, which appears charming only for a short time, but turns destructive of health and happiness soon after. There is none whom old age does not overcome. Our existence is a mere mockery. Our enjoyments are the



source of our own pain, and our desires and ambitions allure us to ruin. Our own senses are our enemy. The splendour of all objects is flickering. Thus there is nothing in life in which a sensible man can find solace. "I, therefore, want to know, if there is any state of existence attainable which is above the sufferings and sorrows of life".

Vasiṣṭha teaches Rāma-candra that true happiness, which every man seeks for, does not reside in the things of the earth. Objects of our enjoyment appear to be pleasant only when we have a hankering after or desire for them. There is real pleasure, joy or happiness which is felt in the absense of desire; and it is the abiding happiness belonging to the very nature of our Self, for which we have to go nowhere outside. It is on account of the ignorance of the Self, and consequently of the false knowledge of the world that we suffer from all sorts of pain. But there is a way out of this wrong vision, and it consists in the right investigation into the nature of the Self and the world.

Before one starts to acquire anything, he must be convinced of the fact that the sole determining factor in any achievement is one's own exertion. Those, who vainly depend upon fate for getting the desired objects and neglect self-effort, are their own enemy. They depend upon a thing which neither exists nor does anything. For fate is a non-entity. Our fate is nothing but the inevitable consequences of our own already-accomplished efforts. The actions performed in a former life determine our destiny in the next. So, the so-called fate can be easily overcome by our present efforts. For, of the two influences, the present is superior to the past, because the past has already been determined, but the present is still undetermined.

There are four preliminary requirements which a man desirous of knowing the truth should have in order that he may easily succeed in his effort, namely, Contentment, Peace of mind, Association with the wise, and Rational Investigation. Of these the last is the most important. For, by no other way does one directly come to the knowledge of the truth than through one's own thinking and experience. In fact, there is no other means of knowing the truth than one's own intuition, without which we can have no conception of it.

The fact of knowledge, according to Vasiṣṭha, presupposes that behind the variety and plurality of objects perceived in the world there is an all-embracing Unity. All relations presuppose some identity behind the related things. And knowledge, specially, can have as its object only that which is homogeneous with it in nature. Consequently all objects along with the perceiving subjects are modifications of an All-inclusive Consciousness, the Brahman.

The objective world is a manifestation of the mind. It is a system of ideas, a play of mentation. Everything is a creature of the mind as dream-experiences are. It is evident from the fact that the yogins do not experience anything at all when they bring their mind to rest. Time is a relation of succession of one idea after another. It is also a product of the mind's imagination and is relative to the flow of ideas. Space is also a relation of co-existence of ideas and so is relative to the activity of the mind. The stability, fixity and order of the world are also like those of the dream-world, due to the imagination of the mind.

On this view there is little or no difference between the waking-world and the world of dreams, with regard to the quality of their contents. Both are alike in

nature and, as long as each lasts, it gives us the same sense of reality and stability as the other.

Every individual knows and perceives what is within his own mind. No mind perceives aught but its own ideas. So the world-appearance has arisen individually to every mind and every mind has the power to manufacture and change its own world. But Vasiṣṭha is not a mere subjective idealist. He admits the plurality of minds and also a common world of experience, which, in its original form, is an ideal construction in the Cosmic Mind which he calls Brahmā. Both these views are reconciled by him thus: The ideas manufactured in the mind of Brahmā are the common objects of experience to us all, although in our mind they enter as our own ideas. Every mind, being the manifestation of the same Divine Mind, is capable of representing within itself other individual minds also as ideas within its own mind. The common ideas of us all give us the appearance of a common world.

There is another very interesting aspect of Vasiṣṭha's Idealism, namely, that there are worlds within worlds *ad infinitum*. Whatever is thought of by the mind, be it the cosmic or the individual mind, becomes, in its own turn, a centre of imaginative activity, *i.e.*, a mind, the creator of its own objective world. In every universe thus, there are contained millions of other worlds and this process goes on *ad infinitum*.

All the worlds are not of the same nature and contents. Some of them probably are entirely similar, some partially similar, and others quite different from one another. Every world-evolution is followed by an involution. The evolution of an objective world within a mind, proceeds in the same way as in a dream.



The dynamic force behind the manifestation of all objects in the world is desire. Imagination actuated by desire assumes the forms of the objects of enjoyment on the one hand and the sense-organs and the body on the other. Involution sets in, when desire to enjoy objects ceases to operate.

This standpoint of idealism saves us from many false conceptions regarding our life. Death is one of them. In death there is nothing really to fear. Even if death brings about the total dissolution of a person, it is a desirable consummation, as, in that case, death means the cessation of all our sorrows and sufferings. But in reality, such total extinction does not occur. Souls bound to their desires are led from one body to another in endless succession, so that death is only a change of experience. A body being dead, the vital airs (*prāṇas*) leave it and float in the atmospheric air, with the seeds of desires that have yet to fructify within them. Then having, after some time, recovered from the state of insensibility produced by death, the minds of the dead begin to experience various kinds of other worlds, in accordance with their respective desires, beliefs and merits. Having enjoyed the bliss of heaven or the torments of hell deserved by them, they again are attracted to the life of this world, on account of their previous *karmas* and unfulfilled desires. It is only those persons who have realised their identity with the Absolute Reality and have become liberated in this life (*Jīvan-muktas*), that do not undergo any further experience of the world, because having given up their physical bodies and hence all their desires, they have no desires to fructify. They attain, after the death of the physical body, the state of *Nirvāṇa*, by which is meant here the total extinction of separate and individual existence.



They merge in the *Brahman*, the Absolute Reality, which is the Self of us all. Death thus does not mean the total extinction of everything within us. It is only the dissolution of the physical body that is brought about by death. Death is a change in our world-experience due to our desires. It is also possible, according to the *Yoga-vāsisṭha*, for us to conquer death to a great extent. Death does not easily approach those who keep themselves above sorrows, cares and anxieties; who are not slaves to their changing moods and passions. Those who are pure in heart and character can live as long as they like.

We, as minds, have got a tremendous power at our command. Whatever the mind thinks and believes intensely, comes to exist. The mind is the seed of the world and the nave of the wheel of the *samsāra*. Creation and dissolution are the rising and setting of its activities. Every individual mind is the master of its destiny and the maker of its body and circumstances. There is no other agency but our own mind, that gives us our desired objects. The Mind creates the body from its own imagination and can change the form of the body in accordance with its own intense imagination. It can cure all the physical diseases of the body by its harmonious and healthy thoughts, because all physical diseases have their origin in mental disorder, according to the *Yoga-vāsisṭha*. It is in the power of every one to continue well and young, as long as one likes. For, whatever the mind determines to experience, no other agency can obstruct. Bondage and freedom are also states of the mind and are determined by it. Bondage or suffering is due to our wrong belief that we are finite beings. Freedom from ignorance and wrong beliefs and the conviction of our being one with the

Absolute Reality, constitute liberation. The Kingdom of Heaven and the Home of Happiness is within us. The moment we attain peace of mind, the entire universe is changed for us.

It is one and the same mind that assumes various forms and is called by various names, on account of its different functions. It is called *Buddhi*, when it knows something definitely; *Ahaṁkāra* (ego), when it assumes for itself a distinct existence; *Citta*, when it displays fickleness; *Karma* (action), when it moves towards a desired end; *Kalpāna* (imagination), when it thinks of some desired thing; *Vāsanā* (desire); *Indriya* (sense-organ), when it reveals to the Self external objects; and *Prakṛti* (root-matter), because it creates objects out of itself. In fact everything that we know, is, according to the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*, a form of the mind.

We have already noted that there are innumerable minds. They all have their origin in the Cosmic Mind (*Brahmā*). The latter has its origin in the Absolute Consciousness. From the Absolute Reality, which is like a calm ocean, *Brahmā* springs like a wave. The rise of the Cosmic Mind in the Absolute Consciousness is not due to some external agency, is not determined by any previous *karmas* and is not due to any purpose to be realised. The creative activity, which manifests itself in the Cosmic Mind, is inherent in the Reality. It works quite spontaneously. Before the rise of the Cosmic Mind the Law of *Karma* does not operate, according to the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*. Every creation is a new creation. The Law of *Karma*, however, begins to bind an individual, the very moment he begins to live a life of separation and distinction from the Reality as a Whole. But however much an individual may think himself to be separate from the Absolute, he is

in reality ever identical with It, for he is a manifestation of Its creative Power.

The Absolute and Its Creative Power, again are not two realities. The Creative Power of the Absolute is ever identical with the Absolute. When the Power is active, it may falsely assume a separate reality for itself, but when it turns back to its source, it merges there and becomes undifferentiated. In that case the Creation comes to an end.

It is very difficult to say anything about the essential nature of the Absolute. It is above all our concepts and categories which hold good in our experience. We cannot, for example, say whether the Absolute Reality is one or many; self or not-self; spirit or matter; conscious or unconscious. All that can be said about the Absolute, by those who have not yet directly realised It, is that It is the All-embracing and All-powerful Reality which manifests Itself in all things. It is the subtlest of the subtle and the grossest of the gross. It is that from which all things arise, that in which all things exist, and that to which all things return. It is the ultimate Self of us all.

The test of reality is eternal persistence. That which has a beginning or an end cannot be said to be real. Nothing in the world is absolutely real according to this test of reality, for everything comes into existence and goes out of it. The Absolute alone is real. The world is only an appearance, a phenomenon. It is real only relatively to the individuals who experience it and to the time when it is being experienced. It is like a dream or mirage.

In Itself the Absolute Reality is above all changes, divisions, differentiations and relations. All these things are relative and fall within the Absolute. But the



Absolute in Itself is free from them. It is distinctionless, homogeneous Reality, which is Consciousness and Bliss through and through. For the Absolute as such there is no creation, no destruction; no bondage or freedom; no change; no evolution or involution. All these things are relatively real, but quite unreal for the Absolute.

To realise the standpoint of the Absolute is the ideal for those, who want to be free from the miseries of life and death. The only method of realising the standpoint of the Absolute is to know the Truth and to live accordingly. This experience does not dawn upon any one merely through the grace of any god or teacher. No god or teacher can confer liberation on one, who is not disciplined through his own right thinking. No renunciation of any kind of actions is required for the purpose. Knowledge is the only requisite for Liberation.

However knowledge should not remain a mere belief, but should become a living experience. This can be done through constant practice (*abhyāsa*) in Yoga. Yoga, in the *Yoga-vāsisŦha*, means the method of freeing oneself from the misery of life and death. It consists in *Brahma-bhāvana*—imagining oneself to be identical with the Absolute, *Mano-laya*—merging the mind in the Absolute, and *Prāṇa-nirodha*, stopping the activity of the vital airs. Any one or all of these methods may be practised by the aspirant to realise the Absolute point of view and consequently to be free from the troubles of individuality and finitude.

The completion of this Yoga of Self-realisation requires prolonged effort on the part of the aspirant. Several stages, seven according to the *Yoga-vāsisŦha*, may be marked on the progressive path of the attainment of the Absolute experience by an individual. The first



is *Subhecchā*—the dawn of the desire to be liberated; the second is *Vicāraṇā*—investigation into the nature of the Reality; the third is the *Tanu-mānasā*—the purification of the mind (lit. thinness); the fourth is the *Sattvāpatti*—the realisation of the pure being (of the Self within); the fifth is the *Asaṃsakti*—rising above attachment to objects; the sixth is the *Padārthabhāvanā*—realisation of the unreality or non-existence of the objects in the Absolute; and the seventh is the *Turyagā*—(the fourth experience) attainment of the Absolute Experience, which is so unique, that It cannot be given the name of waking, dream or sleep. Having realised this experience one becomes liberated.

The person who has become liberated and is yet living in this world is called a *Jīvan-mukta*. He or she (for we must remember the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is not prejudiced against the fair sex and admits that women have equal right to be liberated) is the happiest person on the earth. The *Jīvan-mukta* is neither delighted in prosperity nor dejected in distress. Outwardly discharging all the duties of life, yet he is free within. He is free from the bonds of caste and creed and is polite and friendly to all. He is busy in the affairs of life, but is free from desires. He has nothing to attain, nor has he anything to give up. He is in solitude, even in the midst of worldly activities and is always above the turmoil of life.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE STORIES OF THE *YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA*

As already noticed, the way in which the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* tries to impress his doctrines on the mind of his readers, is, first to enunciate them with appropriate similes and metaphors and then to relate a story by way of illustration. There are no less than fifty-five such illustrative stories in the work. Some of them are mere epic similes and small allegories, while others are really interesting and instructive stories. The main dialogue of Vasiṣṭha and Rama-candra is itself presented in the form of an illustrative story in the present scheme of the work. With regard to many of the stories, it is very difficult to say whether there is any historical truth in them. It is very probable that most of them are the offspring of the author's own imagination. This method has been quite successfully imitated in the service of the Advaita philosophy in *Cahar-darveṣa*, *Candra-kānta* and *Jñāna-vairāgya-prakāśa* in Urdu, Guzerati and Hindi respectively.

Here we propose to have a bird's-eye-view of all the stories of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, in the order in which they occur in the work, although, from a strictly scientific point of view, they may require a different classification on the lines of the classification of the doctrines.

## THE STORY OF THE FIRST PRAKARAṆA

1. *The Story of the Recensions of the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha :*

Once a *Brahmaṇa* named *Sutikṣṇa* happened to have a philosophical doubt in his mind. To get himself satisfied on the problem, he approached *Agastī*. The latter, having answered his question, said to him: "I will, in this connection, relate to you an old story, which is as follows: Once *Agni-veśya* saw his son sitting idle with a doubt in his mind, as to whether the Vedic sacrifices or their renunciation led one to the final deliverance. In order to show him the right way, he told his son the following story: Once a fairy named *Suruci*, while sitting on one of the peaks of the *Himālayas*, happened to see a messenger of *Indra*, and asked him where he was coming from. In reply, the messenger told her that he came back from the hermitage of the sage *Vālmiki*, whither he had, by the command of his master, escorted a king named *Ariṣṭa-nemi*, who was desirous of knowing the way to liberation. The sage recited to the king an old composition of his, in which he had recorded the teachings of *Vasiṣṭha* to his pupil *Rāma-candra* and which was, after its having been composed, recited to *Bharadvāja*. The messenger told the fairy all that the sage had taught the king".

## THE STORIES OF THE SECOND PRAKARAṆA

2. *The Story of Suka, the Son of Vyāsa :*

This is given to illustrate the character of a true aspirant. *Suka*, the son of the great *Vyāsa*, becomes desirous of knowing the Truth and approaches his father. The latter asks him to approach king *Janaka*. He accordingly goes to the city of *Janaka* and gives notice of his arrival at the gate of his palace. The king gets



the information, but, wishing to test the mentality of his guest, does not receive him until the seventh day. S'uka does not at all mind the apparent disregard and remains standing there with a balanced mind. On the eighth day the king welcomes S'uka very warmly, gives him a lodging in his harem, which was full of captivating beauties, who attend upon the guest by the order of the king and feed him on very tasteful and sumptuous food. Amidst all these circumstances, however, the young sage remains unmoved at heart and does not at all fall a prey to the attachment of worldly pleasures, but persists in his intense desire to know the Truth, which the king, having sufficiently tested his fitness, gladly teaches him.

### 3. *The Story of Vasiṣṭha's Learning the Truth from the Creator :*

When *Brahmā* had created the world, he forethought that there would be trouble and suffering in it as a result of ignorance. He, therefore, wanted to create some remedy for the evil arising out of the ignorance of the creatures. He meditated and by his creative imagination brought forth Vasiṣṭha, whom he taught the Science of Peace, and deputed to India (*Bhārata-varṣa*).

## THE STORIES OF THE THIRD PRAKARAṆA

### 4. *The Story of Ākāśaja :*

The story of *Ākāśaja* illustrates that the *Brahman* is beyond the clutches of death.

There was a *Brāhmaṇa* named *Ākāśaja*. The Lord of death very often wished to destroy him, but was unsuccessful in his attempts. The reason was that he could find no *karmas* which bound him, for it is due to such *karmas* alone that one falls a prey to death.



### 5. *The Story of Līlā :*

This is one of the most interesting stories of the work. It is given to illustrate the ultimate ideality of the universe, the philosophy of death and after-death-experience, the relativity of time and space, the existence of worlds within worlds, the power of desires and thoughts, and the equality of man and woman in the acquirement of supernatural powers.

Līlā is the wife of a king, Padma. She is intensely devoted to her husband. Once she asks the priests of her court, whether there is any method by which her husband could be made immortal and learns from them that it is impossible. She then propitiates Sarasvatī, and gets a boon through her, that if her husband should ever die, his soul would never go out of her own room. Very much pleased with her devotion the goddess promises to manifest herself, whenever and wherever she would require her. Padma dies in course of time and leaves Līlā in intense mourning. A voice from the Void, however, assures her, that the soul of the king is within the room where he died, and advises her to preserve the corpse, until the departed soul again vivifies it after some time. Līlā is very much surprised and remembers the goddess, who instantaneously appears before her. Līlā implores the goddess to show her the present experiences of the king in his new world. For the purpose of enabling her to see the other worlds, the goddess teaches her the existence of various planes penetrating one another and existing quite unperceived by the inhabitants of other planes. She teaches her also the method of seeing and visiting the various worlds interpenetrating our world and takes her to the present world of her husband's experience, where he is seen as a young

king of sixteen years ruling over a mighty kingdom. Līlā becomes wonderstruck. But Sarasvatī makes her more so by telling her the story of her and her husband's previous existence thus:—In a small hut in a different world there lived a Brāhmaṇa named Vasiṣṭha, with his wife Arundhatī, who got also a similar boon to keep the soul of her husband confined in her apartment after his death. One day after having witnessed the pompous procession of a king and wishing to be born a king, the poor Brāhmaṇa died. His wife, unable to bear the pangs of separation from her husband, burnt herself with the body of her husband. Sarasvatī, then tells her that all this happened only a week before and that the Brāhmaṇa pair was born as the king Padma and his wife Līlā, in this world, where Padma died after having lived a long life, leaving Līlā alone. Līlā does not believe this story. This goddess, then, takes her to that world, and makes her verify the story from a son of the deceased pair. Through her meditation, she remembers all her previous births since her origin from the Creator. Both Līlā and Sarasvatī then return to the present world of the king, who is now named Vidūratha, and find him in his 70th year. His present wife is also named Līlā. They manifest themselves before the king in his private apartment and mysteriously remind him of his previous existence as Padma. He expresses a desire to be Padma again. His present wife propitiates Sarasvatī to confer a boon upon her to be the wife of her husband even in his future world. After a short time there arises a war in which the king Vidūratha is killed. His soul, which was present throughout in the room where the Padma-corpse was lying, now re-enters the dead body and lo! it rises again as king Padma,

and finds standing before him his two wives, namely, Līlā I and Līlā II, with whom he lives happily for a long time again in this world.

6. *The Story of Karkaṭi:*

This story shows that there is fear or danger in this world only for the ignorant, but the wise who can explain the riddle of the universe and know the true nature of the Reality behind it, are free from all dangers.

There was a huge and gluttonous cannibal woman named Karkaṭi in a northern valley of the Himālayas. She found much difficulty in appeasing her hunger on account of her abnormal size. She, therefore, underwent penances and through the boon of Brahmā got herself reduced to the size of a needle. Thereafter she was called Viṣucikā (sūci = needle). After some time she repents for her action, for with that minute size she could enjoy only a little drop of the blood of her prey. Through another course of penance she got her former size back, but on the condition that she should prey upon the ignorant alone. In order that she may distinguish between the wise and the ignorant, to kill the latter and to spare the former, she framed a set of questions which she put to all whom she met. Once a Kirāta king of the vicinity happened to be seen by her in a forest. She puts the questions to him to all of which he replies quite satisfactorily, as he was a wise man. She lets him alone. As advised by the king, she gives up her huge ugly form and assumes a charming and beautiful appearance. The king now allows her to stay in his own harem. There, she was fed on the bodies of the criminals of the state and lived quite peacefully.

7. *The Story of the Sons of Indu:*

This story illustrates the creative power of thought.



Near the Kailāsa hill there lived a Brāhmaṇa, named Indu. On his death, his ten sons met to think of the best way to commemorate the death of their beloved father and decided that every one of them should become a creator of a universe, through the creative power of his thought. All of them sat in meditation and, through the force of their imagination and affirmation, they actually evolved into ten creators of ten world-systems.

#### 8. *The Story of Indra and Ahalyā :*

This story illustrates how pleasure and pain depend on the determination of mind and to what extent the body becomes anaesthetic to all external tortures, if the mind is fixed on something else. It also shows that the determination of the mind is a proof against all external coercion.

In Magadha there lived a king named Indra-dyumna. He had an exceedingly beautiful wife, Ahalyā. She fell in love with one Indra, a very handsome youth living in the same city, who also loved her very much. No sooner did the king come to know of their secret love than he began to dissuade her. But she was mad after her lover and preferred to undergo all sorts of tortures to giving up her love. The king, then, punished them both in the severest possible ways. But the mutually loving pair remained unmindful of all the pains that their bodies had to undergo, for their minds were so deeply set on each other that they did not feel bodily pain at all. The king ultimately took pity on them and allowed them to live together out of his kingdom.

#### 9. *The Story of the Mind :*

It is an allegory showing the self-troubling nature of the mind.



The Mind is here represented by a mad man having a thousand hands and eyes and beating himself in frenzy with a thousand lashes. He wanders in a dense forest without any aim.

10. *The Story of the Three unborn Boys:*

This is given to illustrate the absolute unreality of the world.

A mother once told the following story to her child: In a city which never existed there lived three princes, two of whom were never born and the third never entered the womb of any mother. They once went out and took their bath in three rivers, two of which were already dried up and the third contained no water at all. There they stayed in three houses, two of which never existed and the third was not yet built. They invited, then, three guests, two of whom had no mouth and the third no stomach, etc., etc.

11. *The Story of a Magician:*

This story is given to illustrate the doctrine that the events which take several years to occur in the history of the world can be identically represented in any mind within a few moments. It illustrates the ideality and relativity of all things, time and space.

In the Uttara-Pāṇḍava country there lived a king named Lavaṇa. Once a magician comes to his court and gets permission from him to show his wonderful powers. He begins to wave his bunch of peacock-feathers before the king and in a moment the king is hypnotised. Within a few moments of his hypnotic trance the king experienced the following long series of events: A very fine horse is sent to him as a present by some feudatory chief. He rides the horse, which goes out of control and takes him to a very distant forest.

The king, feeling very much troubled by him, wishes to get rid of him and so he catches hold of a branch of a tree, under which the horse happened to pass. The horse runs away, leaving the king alone wandering in the unknown forest. While he is feeling very hungry and extremely thirsty, a Caṇḍāla girl is seen by him carrying some food for her father working in a field near by. He requests her to give him a portion of it. She feeds him only on the promise of the king to become her husband and takes him to her father, with whose consent she marries him. The king lives like a Caṇḍāla, in the Caṇḍāla family and brotherhood, eating and enjoying all sorts of filthy things. He brings forth a number of children and continues to live up to a pretty long age. Once, unfortunately, there happens to be a terrible famine in the country and, in spite of his best efforts, he is unable to maintain his big family and so, he commits suicide by throwing himself into the fire. Immediately he wakes up from his trance into his original state as King Lavaṇa. He is very much surprised and, wishing to know whether there was any reality behind his trance vision, he starts to visit the place in the Vindhya hills which was the scene of his Caṇḍāla-experiences. To his great surprise, he could identify all the items of his vision with the actual facts which occurred in this place. He found not only the familiar places and objects, but his old parents-in-law, whose ugly daughter he was compelled to marry in the trance under the necessity of appeasing his hunger.

#### THE STORIES OF THE FOURTH PRAKARAṆA

##### 12. *The Story of Sukracarya:*

This story illustrates the marvellous effect of the desire or wish on the life of an individual, and shows

how even a mere passing wish brings about a new birth in which it will be realised.

The great sage Bhṛgu and his son S'ukrācārya were once undergoing penance in a valley of the Mandara mountain. While engaged in meditation, Sukra happens to catch sight of a celestial damsel and at once a wish creeps in his mind to enjoy her company. His subtle body leaves the physical and reaches the city of the gods, where he finds his beloved and wins her love. There he lives for a number of years in the sweet company of his beloved, until, the force of his good actions being exhausted, he falls down on the earth through rain and becomes a grain of paddy. A Brāhmaṇa eats the grain, and he is born as a son to him. As a Brāhmaṇa boy, he becomes fond of deer and consequently becomes a deer in his next life. In this manner he transmigrates in several bodies, until he is born as the son of a *Tapasvin* and takes to the performance of penance on the banks of the Ganges. In the mean time, the original body of Sukra, left by him long ago, begins to decay. His father noticing it, becomes angry with the god of death, who, manifesting himself on being wrongly accused, explains the whole thing. Both then approach the boy sitting in penance and ask him to meditate on the history of his past lives. He remembers his Sukra-form, goes back to it with his mental body and revives it.

### 13. *The Story of Damā, Vyāla and Kaṭa :*

This story illustrates that the will to live is the cause of all failures and sufferings in life and the absence of it is that of success and achievements.

There was a wealthy and wise Demon king of the Pātāla world, named Sāmbara. He waged a great war



upon the gods and gave them a severe defeat. The chief reason for his success was that he could create, through his magical powers, three great warriors, Dāma, Vyāla and Kaṭa. They fought most selflessly, without the least desire to preserve themselves and so could not be defeated by the gods, whom they drove out of heaven. The gods approach Brahmā, who comes to know of the cause of their success through his meditation. He advised the gods to fight with the demon-warriors in such a manner as to create the desire for self-preservation and victory in their mind. The gods succeeded in doing so, because the demon-warriors were ignorant of the true nature of the Self and so killed them in a battle.

#### 14. *The Story of Bhīma, Bhāsa and Dṛḍha :*

This story is a continuation of the above and illustrates the same thing with an additional point that the desire for self-preservation cannot be created in one who knows the true nature of the Self.

Sambara, the above-mentioned demon king, seeing his great warriors thus killed by the gods, now creates another triad of Bhīma, Bhāsa and Dṛḍha, in whom it was impossible for the gods to create the feeling of ego, as they were born with the knowledge of the real nature of the Self. They defeated the gods in spite of the best efforts of the latter.

#### 15. *The Story of Daśara :*

This story illustrates that peace cannot be achieved by undergoing penances, or performing sacrifices enjoined in the Vedas. Such things can at the most purify our intellect, if done thoughtfully and with unselfish motives. Knowledge of the Self dawns only through rational thinking and meditation.



In Magadha there lived a *Muni* named Dāsūra. He was ignorant of the nature of the Self. When his father Saraloman dies, he weeps bitterly. Gods of the forest console and advise him to attain peace. Seeking peace, he takes to the performance of penance, but in vain. He performs very difficult sacrifices, but does not attain peace. He then takes to meditation and thinking and at last knows the real nature of the Self and finds peace within. Through his boon a son is born to a forester-woman. Dāsūra teaches the science of peace to this boy, when he grows up. Vasiṣṭha, while one day passing that way, enjoys one of his lectures to his pupil.

#### 16. *The Story of Kaca :*

This is not a story in the real sense of the term, but a soliloquy on the immanence of God.

Kaca was the son of Bṛhaspati. He once sat in *samādhi*. Waking up from his *samādhi* state he sang a very beautiful song on the immanence of the Brahman in every thing of the universe.

### THE STORIES OF THE FIFTH PRAKARAṆA

#### 17. *The Story of Janaka :*

This story illustrates how accidental suggestion sometimes awakens the dormant discriminative tendencies in the previous birth of an individual.

One day, the king of the Videha country, whose name was Janaka was sitting in his garden. There, he happened to hear some very inspiring songs sung by the celestial beings passing that way. These songs produced a very deep impression on his mind and set him to meditate on the illusory nature of the world and on the real nature of the Self. He discovers that the main cause of all suffering was the ignorant mind.

He realises that the true nature of the Self is free from ego. Even then he rules over his kingdom.

### 18. *The Story of Puṇya and Pāvana:*

This story shows that it is absurd and futile to be sorrowful, when some beloved person is separated from us, seeing that we have had countless relations in the long history of our past lives.

On the Mahendra mountain in the Jambū-dvīpa there lived a sage, named Dīrgha-tapas. He had two sons—Puṇya and Pāvana. The former had acquired the knowledge of the Truth, whereas the latter was only on the path, when their beloved father passed away. Pāvana weeps very bitterly at the death of his father. Puṇya teaches him the absurdity of his action, on the ground that he had had numberless fathers in his past lives. He reminds him of the countless lives he had lived as a deer, a lion, a monkey, a prince, a crow, an elephant, an ass, a bird, a puppy, etc.

### 19. *The Story of Bali:*

This story is given to illustrate how the state of nir-vi-kalpa samādhi can be realised through meditation on the truth that everything is consciousness.

Bali was the son of the famous Virocana of Pātāla. He begins to reflect that life, as it is generally lived, is a monotonous drudgery. We repeat the same course of actions and always remain unsatisfied. He recollects that his father, who was famous for his wisdom, used to speak of a very wonderful state of existence called liberation, in which man finds undecaying peace. He now wishes to know more about it and approaches his preceptor, Sukrācārya. The latter teaches him that he should realise that every thing is consciousness. Bali meditates on this truth and realises it in his nir-vi-kalpa

samādhi. He becomes a liberated man and rules over his kingdom wisely.

## 20. *The Story of Prahlāda* :

This story illustrates that even the great gods like Viṣṇu cannot cause a man to realise the Self without his own thinking and meditation. The Grace of god or a teacher cannot confer the knowledge of the Self on any person.

Once Viṣṇu defeated the demons and killed their lord, Hiraṇya-kāṣipu. This impressed Prahlāda, the son of the killed demon, very much. He begins to worship the victorious Viṣṇu. The latter is very much pleased with his devotion, and appears before him when he was very eager to see him. When Prahlāda is asked to choose a boon, he wants to realise the true nature of the Self. Viṣṇu tells him that he would be able to realise it only through his own thinking and meditation, for no god or teacher can confer the knowledge of the Self on any person. Prahlāda follows his advice and attains a state of thought-less samādhi. He forgets his royal duties and continues to enjoy the bliss of samādhi. Anarchy prevails in his kingdom, for he neglects it. Viṣṇu comes down and, waking him up from the thought-less samādhi, advises him to rule over his kingdom as an ideal and wise ruler. Prahlāda does accordingly.

## 21. *The Story of Gāḍhi* :

This is a very interesting story, illustrating the creative power of *Maya* and the possibility of the identical representation of the real historical series of events by the individual mind as the creation of *Maya* within a few moments before their actual occurrence.

There was a Brāhmaṇa named Gāḍhi. He had a keen desire to know the nature of *Maya* and worshipped



Viṣṇu to get his desire fulfilled. Viṣṇu granted a boon to him that he would soon realise the nature of *Maya*. After a few days, while he was bathing in a river, he dipped his head in water, and lo! he saw the following vision: He is ill at his home and experiences his death. He is born again of an ugly and black Caṇḍāla woman. He grows and marries a Caṇḍāla girl and begets several children. Once, while passing through a country called Kīra, he happens to be picked up by the elephant which was let loose by the people to elect a king in the place of the one who was dead and is installed as king in spite of himself. He rules over the country for a number of years, until he is discovered to be a Caṇḍāla by birth by his high caste subjects, who enter into the fire by way of performing a *prayas-citta* for having been ruled by a low class king. He feels very sorry at the sight of this horrible scene and jumps himself into the fire. The intense pain of being burnt wakes him up from his vision in the water, where he, as Gādhī, was taking his bath. All this happened within a few seconds of his dip. After a few months he meets a traveller who relates to him, in the course of his account of his travelling, all that Gādhī experienced within a few seconds of his vision. The coincidence being too wonderful to be believed, he starts to verify it and actually finds all that he saw in his vision had actually happened in the real and historical world. Such is the wonderful power of *Maya*!

## 22. *The Story of Uddālaka:*

This story is given to show how the mind can be controlled and the true nature of the Self realised through meditation and the practice of the control of the vital airs (*Prāṇa*).



There was a *Muni*, Uddālaka by name. He makes up his mind to experience the state of samādhi. Finding the mind to be a great impediment in his way he addresses it and tries to discover the nature of the Self. Through the control of (prāṇa) vital airs he realises the state of samādhi.

### 23. *The Story of Suraghu :*

This story illustrates how equanimity can be attained even amidst the duties of the world.

There was, once, a king of Kirātas near the Kailāsa mountain. The *Muni*, Māṇḍavya, pays a visit to him and, being requested, teaches him how one can experience equanimity even in the midst of worldly duties and that the Self is the reality which persists, even after every object is eliminated. The *Muni* goes back and Suraghu sets about to realise his teachings in experience and succeeds. Once he is visited by a Persian King Parṇāda, whom he teaches the way of enjoying the state of samādhi, while one is busily engaged in worldly affairs.

### 24. *The Story of Bhāsa and Vilāsa :*

Through this story the author teaches that one cannot be well and at peace unless the mind is brought under control and the Self is realised.

On the Sahya mountain in the north there lived a great Ṛṣi, Atri, with his pious wife Anasūyā. They had two sons Bhāsa and Vilāsa. After the death of their parents they went in different directions to undergo penance. After sometime they meet each other and when Vilāsa enquires of the welfare of his brother, the latter replies that welfare cannot be possibly attained, unless one has realised the true Self and brought his mind under control.

25. *The Story of Vita-havya:*

This story is in illustration of Self-realisation and attainment of the best state of existence.

Vita-havya was a *Muni* in the Vindhya hills. He performed various rites prescribed by the *Sāstras* but could not attain peace. He now makes up his mind to realise the state of *nir-vi-kalpa samādhi*. He addresses his mind, chastises it for its fickleness, controls it and the senses and attains the state of *samādhi* in which he stays for a very long time. In the meantime his body was covered by earth, so that when he wakes up from his *samādhi*-state, he finds himself unable to move. He does not mind it but creates another world through his imagination and lives there as a liberated man. Once again he remembers his body being covered by earth and makes up his mind to uncover it. He enters the orb of the sun and comes back therefrom with a ray of the sun, which removes the earth and relieves the body of it. In this body he lives for a long time as a free man. Once he makes up his mind to realise the disembodied state of liberation and, entering a cave, withdraws himself from the body, senses, mind, etc. He, then, realises the highest stage of existence, which is thoughtless, immutable and eternal bliss.

THE STORIES OF THE FIRST PART OF THE  
SIXTH PRAKARAṆA26. *The Story of Kāka-Bhusuṇḍa:*

This story illustrates the possibility of an infinitely long and healthy life through the mastery of the vital airs (*Prāṇa*) and the *Kuṇḍalini*-force.

Once Vasiṣṭha, while sitting in the assembly of the gods, happens to hear about Kāka-Bhusuṇḍa who is

said to be enjoying the longest life, becomes inquisitive to see him and proceeds to the *Kailāsa* mountain, where he is said to reside in the form of a crow in the tree known as *Kalpa*-tree. *Kāka-Bhusuṇḍa* welcomes him and on being questioned, describes to him his birth, long life, the way how he survives the universal destruction, the wonderful experiences of his life and how one can live a long and healthy life. He says that he has seen eight births of *Vasiṣṭha*, a hundred of *Viṣṇu*, one thousand of *Buddha*, eleven of *Rāma* and ten of *Kṛṣṇa*. In his lifetime the *Mahā-bhārata* has been composed eleven times and the *Rāmāyaṇa* twelve times. He gives a discourse on the science of vital airs and *Kuṇḍalīnī*.

27. *The Story of Deva-Pūja (Worship of God):*

This story shows that the only and the best form of worship is that wherein there is no necessity for any external show.

Once *Vasiṣṭha* goes to the *Kailāsa* and shows his devotion to *Śiva*, who becomes pleased with him and appears before him with his consort, *Pārvatī*. Being asked "What is the best form of worship?" the god tells him that the worship of the Self is the best form of worship and that the knowledge of the Self is the best way of worshipping the Self.

28. *The Story of a Bilva-fruit:*

The Absolute Consciousness is here compared to a *Bilva* fruit to show that the entire universe exists within such Consciousness.

29. *The Story of a Piece of Granite:*

Here the *Brahman* is compared to a huge block of stone. Even as a piece of granite contains within it all the statues that can possibly be made of it, so in



the *Brahman* all the forms of the Universe exist potentially.

### 30. *The Story of Arjuna :*

This story says that at a particular period of time, when the earth would abound in evil-doers Viṣṇu would come down in the form of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna to kill them. Arjuna, while in the battle-field of the *Mahā-bharata* war, would hesitate to kill, Kṛṣṇa would teach him the right attitude towards life and having acquired it he would do his duty without any attachment.

### 31. *The Story of Sata-rudra :*

This story illustrates the power of thought, desire and imagination on transmigration and the doctrine of worlds existing within worlds.

There was a mendicant. Once he entertained the thought of becoming a house-holder and consequently in his dream becomes one. The dream personality again, by his wish, dreams himself to be a *Brahmaṇa*. The process goes on, changing the man into a hundred forms in the course of a series of dreams, until he becomes Rudra. As Rudra he becomes omniscient and comes to know of all the hundred forms thus imagined living in their own separate worlds. He wakes the dreamers up, and the imagined forms survive as distinct entities. Such is the creative power of thought.

### 32. *The Story of a Vetala :*

This is narrated to show that there is no danger anywhere for a knower of the *Brahman*.

There lived a *Vetala* in the Vindhya hills. At nights he used to come out in search of prey. Once he happened to meet the king of the vicinity, who was learned in the knowledge of the *Brahman*. He put several questions to the king, who answered them to his



satisfaction. The *Vetala* could not harm him in any way as he knew the *Brahman*.

### 33. *The Story of Bhagīratha :*

This story illustrates the peculiar trait in the character of a living liberated man that, although he does not stand in need of worldly actions, yet for the good of others he reverts to them in spite of his detachment.

There lived a great king named Bhagīratha, who brought the Ganges down to the earth. Once he begins to think of the unreality of worldly possessions, goes to his spiritual teacher, Tri-tula, and acquires the knowledge of the Self. Thereupon, he gives the whole of his kingdom and property away in charity, and goes to a lonely place to meditate. Here he realises the Truth and lives in blissful peace. Once Bhagīratha was passing through the country which he formerly ruled and on the death of the ruling king the people had to choose another. Having recognised Bhagīratha, they entreated him to be their king. Bhagīratha accepted their offer for the sake of their good and ruled over the country justly and wisely.

### 34. *The Story of Cudālā :*

This is one of the most interesting and instructive stories in the whole work. It shows that a woman is not shut out from the temple of wisdom; she has an equal right to Self-knowledge and, if she makes effort, can realise the Self, even earlier than man. Having realised the Self, she can help her husband on his path. The real and genuine renunciation which is essential for Self-realisation is not the renunciation of external things and works, but of the internal desire or craving for them. The busy ruler of a kingdom, as Cudālā was,

above the turmoils of life and at peace within, she is an ideal example of a truly liberated individual.

Once there lived a king named Śikhī-dhvaja in Mālava. He married Cūḍālā, a princess of the Surāṣṭra country. Having lived a happy life of youthful enjoyment, both become dis-satisfied with the pleasures of life and set themselves to seek knowledge of the Self. Being more enthusiastic and discriminative, Cūḍālā succeeds in getting a true vision of life; consequently a unique lustre brightens her face. Unable to realise the Self her husband cannot understand the reason of her joy. She tries to help him, but he takes her advice lightly, in spite of her showing him her supernatural powers and so fails to achieve peace within him. He takes to the performance of religious ceremonies which do not help him. He then renounces his kingdom and every thing in his possession and goes to a forest, in spite of his wife's entreaties not to do so. Then he puts himself to severe austerities and so becomes languished. Cūḍālā in the meantime rules over her kingdom well and wisely. One day she takes compassion on him and visits him secretly. She intends again to teach him the right way of self-realisation, but thinking that he would not care to listen to her, she, by her Yogic Power, transforms herself into a young heavenly *Brahmaṇa*, named Kumbha. The king, being impressed with the personality of Kumbha, accepts him as his teacher and learns from him the secret of Self-realisation, which consists, not in the external renunciation of things and duties, but in the internal renunciation of the hankering after them, which is the root of all evil. The queen does not forget to fulfil her royal duties, to which she goes back now and then. The king having got the true vision of the Self,

experiences the *samādhi* state and becomes liberated from the pairs of opposite feelings. The queen in the form of Kumbha tests him in many ways. One day Kumbha tells the king that he is cursed by Durvāsas to be a woman at nights and shows himself unhappy. The king asks him not to mind it at all for, says he, what cannot be cured must be cheerfully endured. The nocturnal personality of Kumbha, Madanikā, now tells the king that as it is quite natural for a young woman to have a husband, she must now marry; and proposes to marry the king. He sees no loss or gain in it and therefore, to be of some service to her, marries her. Both pass their nights in conjugal happiness. In order to test whether the king has acquired any sort of attachment in his heart, which is the real bondage in life, she creates, by her Yogic powers, a lover and throws herself in his arms in the most amorous attitude in the absence of the royal sage and continues in that position till he comes and sees the pair. The sight does not move him; he is unperturbed and unchanged. He keeps his balance of mind and comes out successful in the test. In such other various ways she trains her husband in the art of living above life's turmoil and in the end brings him back to rule over the renounced kingdom like a perfectly free and wise man.

### 35. *The Story of a Kiraṭa:*

This story emphasises the value of effort, even though it be for small things, as often, we get precious things through efforts which were originally directed towards the achievement of ordinary ones.

There was a miserly *Kiraṭa*. Once a cowrie shell fell down from his hands. He being a miser



began to search for it vigorously and continued his search for three days. Accidentally he found a philosopher's stone.

36. *The Story of a Cintāmaṇi (Philosopher's Stone):*

This shows that one should not disregard the valuable things which one has got and wander in search of others or of similar ones elsewhere, as king Sikhi-dhvaja did on his wife's advice.

A man was in search of a Philosopher's stone. He happened to find it accidentally. But he thought the philosopher's stone to be too valuable a thing to be found so easily and himself to be too unfortunate to find it so soon and so he threw it away, thinking it to be a piece of glass. After throwing it away he proceeds further and reaches a forest where, after repeated efforts, he finds nothing but pieces of glass.

37. *The Story of an Elephant:*

This story is narrated to point out the lesson that one should never let slip an opportunity to vanquish one's enemy, *which*, in the case of an aspirant for self-realisation, is his individuality. Opportunity once lost is lost forever.

There was a tamed elephant. Once he got an opportunity to be free from the control of his master. If he had only availed of it, he could have won his freedom for ever by defeating the efforts of his controllers. But he did not utilise the opportunity. Consequently he was again bound and put under control.

38. *The Story of Kaca:*

This is given to show that true renunciation of all things consists in the renunciation of the ego.

Kaca, the son of Bṛhaspati, goes to his father for advice about the realisation of the Self. The father asks



him to renounce every thing in order to find peace. The son goes to a forest, literally giving up everything. Yet he does not find peace. Again he is advised to give up every thing. The son does not again understand him and tries to give up even the little that was in his possession, but in vain. The father again comes after three years and finds his son without peace. Then he explains to him that renouncing every thing does not mean throwing away every thing. It is the withdrawal from the mind which finitises the ego. This can be easily done by affirmation of one's Divinity.

### 39. *The Story of a Mithyā-Puruṣa (Unreal Man):*

This illustrates the futility of the efforts of the ego to limit the Self within finite objects which are perishable.

There was a *mithyā-puruṣa* (unreal man) who wanted to encase space. For this he makes a jar, but after sometime the jar is broken, leaving the man bewailing the loss of the space enclosed in the jar. Then he digs a well, constructs a tank, builds a four-storeyed house, etc. But all these things come to destruction one after another. Bewailing the futility of his efforts to preserve space in a finite form, the man dies.

### 40. *The Story of Bhṛṅgīśa:*

This story is related to teach Rāma to be a great renouncer, a great doer and a great enjoyer.

Once Bhṛṅgīśa went to the Mahā-meru to see Lord Śiva. Having bowed down to him, he asked for advice. The god advised him to be a great renouncer, a great doer, and a great enjoyer and explained the meaning of the three terms.

41. *The Story of Ikṣvāku :*

This story contains the philosophy which Manu is said to have taught to Ikṣvāku.

There was a great king, Ikṣvāku, an ancestor of Rāma. Once he begins to think of the unreality of worldly things and becomes inquisitive to know the Truth. He goes to Manu in the Brahma-loka and learns from him the origin, stay and decay of the universe, the cause of bondage and freedom, the stages of Self-realisation, the nature of the ego and the *Maya* and the characteristics of the living liberated beings.

42. *The Story of a Hunter and a Sage :*

This story describes the nature of the *Turiya* state, *i.e.*, the state of consciousness free from the experiences of waking, dream, and deep-sleep states.

A hunter pursued a deer which outran him and passed beyond his vision. On his way he saw a sage sitting in meditation. Being asked as to which direction the deer took, the *Muni* replies that he, being above all the states of relative experience, does not care to know anything; and therefore, does not know which way the deer went.

THE STORIES OF THE SECOND PART OF THE SIXTH  
PRAKARAṆA43. *The Story of a Vidyā-dhara :*

This story explains how the study of the spiritual *Sāstras* can fructify only in those who have control over their senses.

Vasiṣṭha once asked Bhusuṇḍa, whether he knew any individual, who could not attain Self-knowledge in spite of having lived long. Bhusuṇḍa told him that there was a *Vidyā-dhara*, who could not realise the Self in spite of his having lived for four *Kalpas*. Having acquired

in him a little discrimination, the *Vidyā-dhara* came to him (Bhusuṇḍa) and said that his passions and senses were his stumbling blocks. Bhusuṇḍa taught him the way to control them and consequently he realised the Self.

#### 44. *The Story of Indra :*

This story illustrates the possibility of the existence of a whole world-experience within an atom.

Once Indra, the king of the gods, is defeated by the demons. To save his life, he shortens his size and enters a sun's ray. There he imagines a world and rules over it. After his death his descendants rule there. One of his descendants realises Cosmic Consciousness and comes to know of this fact.

#### 45. *The Story of Maṅki :*

This story illustrates the possibility of Self-realisation through the teachings of another, provided the mind is already prepared to imbibe them.

Once Vasiṣṭha, when coming to officiate as a priest in the sacrifice to be performed by Aja, meets a *Brāhmaṇa* named Maṅki on the way. The traveller begins to talk of the evils of the world. Vasiṣṭha teaches him the science of the Self. Hearing him, the *Brāhmaṇa* becomes liberated, because he was already ripe for it.

#### 46. *The Story of the Mind Compared to a Deer :*

In this story the mind is compared to a wandering deer. The deer is running here and there in a barren land finding no rest, until he finds the shade of a tree. The shade of the tree, in the case of the mind, is *samādhi*.

#### 47. *The Story of a Block of Stone.*

This is one of the most interesting stories. It illustrates the possibility of a whole universe, with its cosmic



gods and other beings, to be imagined (created) within a point in space.

Once Vasiṣṭha himself wanted to meditate in a solitary place. Finding disturbances everywhere, even in the etherial plane, he retires to the *Sūnya* plane. There, he imagines a hut in which he sits in *śamādhi* and experiences and wanders through innumerable worlds, one existing within the other. Waking up from the *śamādhi* state he hears a sweet and melodious song and, through his *Ākāśa-dhāraṇā*, concentration and fixity of mind on the plane of Ether (which is the medium of sound), he finds out the source of the sweet song to be a beautiful young woman, who, when requested, tells him that in a corner of the world imagined by him there is a mountain. Within a point of a stone of that mountain, she and her husband are living. They both stand in need of Self-knowledge for which she seeks Vasiṣṭha's help. The latter, becoming curious, accompanies her and actually finds her husband there. Having acquired self-knowledge the husband sits in *nir-vikalpa śamādhi* and thereby the world of his *saṁkalpa* collapses. This is seen even by Vasiṣṭha through his *Dhāraṇā*. Returning therefrom, Vasiṣṭha comes back to his hut, but finds that his body in the hut is occupied by a *Siddha*. Vasiṣṭha withdraws the force of his *saṁkalpa* and his body collapses whereupon the *Siddha* falls down to the earth. Vasiṣṭha explains the matter to him, and both go to the *Siddha-loka* and live there.

#### 48. *The Story of Vipascit :*

This story is also one of the most interesting ones. It illustrates the creative power of thought and the effort of desire on one's transmigratory career.

There lived a king named Vipascit at Tatamiti in *Jambū-dvīpa*. Once he is attacked by enemies from all



directions. Wishing to multiply his body to cope with all the four invasions he performs a sacrifice in which he offers his own flesh to the flames of the sacrificial fire and becomes four Vipascits. They put the enemies to flight and set out for world-conquest in all directions. They go far and wide, live in different countries, die there and experience different series of transmigrations. One of them is said to be present in the body of a deer in the zoological museum of king Daśaratha at the time of Vasiṣṭha's discourse to Rāma. Rāma, hearing this, becomes very curious and asks the deer to be brought in the assembly. To show the truth of the story, Vasiṣṭha, by the power of his thought, makes him take the human form and names him Bhāsa. Bhāsa, now, describes his experiences in the assembly.

49. *The Story of the Vaṭa-dhānā Princes :*

This story illustrates the endlessness of the world.

There was a country named Vaṭa-dhānā. One of its kings had three sons. They desired to see the end of the universe and started on a tour. No less than 17 lacs of years have passed, yet they are still wandering, as there is no end to the universe.

50. *The Story of a Corpse :*

This story illustrates the fact that every individual is also the Cosmic Deity of his universe.

Once there was a hunter. He teased a *Muni* who cursed him to become a mosquito. Having lived as a mosquito, he becomes a deer and then, a hunter again. Being advised to give up his wrong-doings and to acquire Self-knowledge, he undergoes penance, returns back to the *Muni* and asks him, how the internal imagination takes the form of an external world. The

*Muni* relates his own experience thus: Once he saw a man sleeping and, moved by curiosity, entered the sleeping man's dream-world through the power of *Dharaṇā* and saw a world there. Forgetting his original form, he lived there for 100 years until he was reminded of it by a *Muni*. Coming out he found all that experience a moment's work. The hunter does not understand the truth of this story. He undergoes penance and gets the boon of having a body as big as a *Brahmaṇḍa*. Left by his soul, it falls upon another *Brahmaṇḍa* and is observed by *Vipaścit* of a former (48th) story. Then he becomes a king, *Sindhu*, the enemy of *Vidūratha* of the story of *Lilā* (5th), and ultimately realises *Nirvāṇa* through the teachings of his ministers.

#### 51. *The Story of a Block of Stone :*

In this story a detailed comparison of the *Brahman*, with a huge stone is attempted. As a piece of stone has within it, in potential form, all the statues that can be possibly made out of it, so is the *Brahman*, the source and the stay of the whole universe.

#### 52. *The Story of the Brahmaṇḍa :*

In this story *Vasiṣṭha* relates what he heard from *Brahmā* about the origin of the universe.

#### 53. *The Story of the Sons of Indu :*

This story is a repetition of the story No. 7, narrated in *Prakarāṇa* III.

#### 54. *The Story of a Tapasa :*

This illustrates the possibility of the multiplication of worlds by the power of thought and desire and the co-ordination of the various conflicting desires of different people with regard to the same object or person.

In a country there are eight brothers. Every one of them wishes to be an emperor of the seven continents and to that effect undergoes penance. All of them get boons to the effect that their desires will be fulfilled at the same time. Their wives, in their own turn, get boons to the effect that the souls of their husbands will not go out of their rooms after their death. All this comes to the notice of a traveller, Kunda-danta, who is at a loss to understand how these self-conflicting desires can be fulfilled at the same time. He is advised to go to Ayodhyā to understand the mystery. There he relates the story to Rāma-candra, who brings Kunda-danta to the assembly and gets his doubts removed by Vasiṣṭha.

#### 55. *The Story of a Wood-cutter.*

This last story points out that, though the teacher and the *Sāstras* are not the direct cause of Self-realisation, yet they, if constantly resorted to, sometimes, bring a man to the direct realisation of the truth.

There was a very poor wood-cutter. He used to go to a forest in search of wood every day and supported himself and his family on what he could get by selling the wood thus collected. As a result of his constant effort in searching for wood in the forest, he one day happened to find a desire-fulfilling gem (Philosopher's stone). The gem made him rich and happy.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTA AND THE YOGA-VĀSIṢṬHA

IN chapters 52—58 of the first half of the *Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa* (VIa) of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which constitute the *Arjunopākhyāna* (the story of Arjuna), Vasiṣṭha is represented as teaching to Rāma-candra what Kṛṣṇa would (in the future tense) teach Arjuna on the battle-field of the *Mahā-bharata* war which, Vasiṣṭha says, would take place long after. All these chapters comprise 254 verses of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The philosophy expounded therein is in full harmony with the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha and differs much from the philosophy of the current *Bhagavad-gītā*. The verbs used in these chapters are throughout in the future tense (*e.g.*, will teach, will happen, etc.).

It is very strange that, out of the seven hundred verses of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, only twenty-seven are wholly or partially identical with the verses distributed over these chapters in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. Nothing more is common between the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. To what this is due it is very difficult to surmise. The orthodox reader will probably hold that, as Vasiṣṭha himself says, the actual teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā* occurred long after Vasiṣṭha had taught his doctrines to Rāma-candra and that Vasiṣṭha could have known what



Kṛṣṇa would teach to Arjuna only through his power of pre-cognition and so only in a general way. Had the *Bhagavad-gītā* been already in existence, Vasiṣṭha would have repeated much more of it in his teachings. It is very difficult to accept this view, so long as we find that the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is not on the whole identically the same as taught in these chapters of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It is the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, that Kṛṣṇa is made to teach in the chapters concerned and not that which is presented in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The verses selected from the *Bhagavad-gītā* are only those which can easily fit in with the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha. It may also be possible that the *Bhagavad-gītā* current at the time of the composition of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* might have been a different one.

The following table gives the verses common between the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*:

<i>The Bhagavad-gītā</i>	<i>The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha</i>		
II. 8.	VIa.	55.	14.
II. 14.	VIa.	54.	2.
II. 16.	VIa.	55.	12.
II. 17.	VIa.	55.	13.
II. 17, 18.	VIa.	53.	2.
II. 19.	VIa.	52.	37.
II. 20.	VIa.	52.	26.
II. 47/2—48/1.	VIa.	54.	26.
II. 48/1.	VIa.	53.	16/1.
II. 70.	VIa.	54.	38.
III. 6.	VIa.	54.	36.
III. 7.	VIa.	54.	37.
III. 27/2.	VIa.	53.	5/2. (significant change in the first half.)

*The Bhagavad-gītā**The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

IV. 18.	Vla.	54.	25.
IV. 20.	Vla.	54.	33.
V. 11.	Vla.	53.	9.
VI. 29.	Vla.	53.	43. (with a little change).
VI. 29/1.	Vla.	53.	60/1.
VIII. 1.	Vla.	58.	1.
IX. 27.	Vla.	54.	22.
IX. 34.	Vla.	53.	34.
X. 1.	Vla.	54.	1.
XV. 5.	Vla.	53.	66.
XV. 9.	Vla.	55.	21.
XVII. 4/1.	Vla.	55.	18/1.



BOOK II

THE PHILOSOPHY OF VASIṢṬHA

PART I

PRELIMINARIES





## CHAPTER I

### CONSCIOUSNESS OF SUFFERING

IT has been customary in India to point out at the commencement of a philosophical work the type of readers for whom it is intended. This is termed *adhikara* and is the first problem discussed at the beginning of almost all the Commentaries of the *Vedānta-sūtras*. To raise this problem does not seem wholly unnecessary, though it may look so to the modern reader. It is quite evident that every book cannot be of interest or use to every person. The same book that is a source of pleasure and solace to one may be thrown away as trash by another. Who would, for example, take the trouble of reading through the works of Kant or Hegel, if he is not deeply interested in philosophy? Men of devotional fervour find in the *Bhagavata* what others cannot imagine. Men of highly moral temperament will shun those sensational novels which are very eagerly perused by ordinary people.

Who is the person, then, for whom the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is meant? What type of readers will find interest in it? Who, in other words, is the fit recipient of the philosophy expounded in it? Bhagavān Dās, in his Prefatory Note to his recently published *Mystic Experiences*, writes about the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*: "The saying about it among the Vedāntins is, that it is a work of

*siddhavastha*, i.e., for a philosopher-yogin, who, having mastered the theory, is passing on to the practice of it; while the other well-known works, even the *Gīta*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Brahma-sūtras*, are works of the *sādhana-vastha*, i.e., for those who are yet trying to master the theory." Such, however, is not the view of the author of the work himself. He says: "He has a right (*adhikāra*) to study this work, who has become aware of his bondage, and longs to be free; and he who is no longer in utter ignorance (about the nature of the world and the Self), but has not yet attained the (full) knowledge." (I, 2, 2.)<sup>1</sup> This, in other words, means that the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha is meant for those on whom the reflective consciousness has dawned and has revealed that dark aspect of life which is called bondage, evil, or suffering, in different systems of thought.

The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* has very nicely depicted the mentality of such people in the first *prakaraṇa* of the work, viz., the *Vairāgya-prakaraṇa*. The character and reflections of Rāma are eminently of this type. The questions put by Rāma to his teacher are those of all such people. It will not, therefore, be out of place here to note how Rāma felt, what he thought and to what extent he aspired to know the secret of escaping the sufferings of life. Rāma, the eldest of the young sons of Daśa-ratha, the ancient king of Ayodhyā, begins to reflect on the problems of life and discovers the reign of suffering, decay and death everywhere, like the *Sākya* prince, Gautama, of later times. Finding every thing and every state of

<sup>1</sup> अहं बद्धो विमुक्तः स्यामिति यस्यास्ति निश्चयः ।

नायन्तमज्ञो नो तन्त्रः सोऽस्मिन्नाहोऽधिकारवान् ॥

existence unsatisfactory, he becomes indifferent, restless and morose. His mental unrest finds expression in his conduct; and his attendants, not understanding the reason for the change in his behaviour, become very anxious about him and report the matter to the king in the following manner: Your gracious Majesty! We are observing a serious change in the life of Rāma these days. "He has become unmindful of his daily duties, which he does, or does not, perform with a gloomy countenance, when repeatedly besought by us. (I, 10, 10.) He is averse to bath, worship, distribution of alms, and even to his meals, which he takes without relish, when often requested by us. (I, 10, 11.) He no more likes to be rocked in swings by young maidens of the harem. (I, 10, 12.) Ornaments, however precious, please him no longer. (I, 10, 13.) He is not happy, even while sitting in fragrant bowers, with beauty dancing all around him. (I, 10, 14.) He becomes displeased with, and looks with tearful eyes on, everything sweet, elegant and pleasing. (I, 10, 15.) He takes delight in lonely places, remote corners, forests and river-sides. (I, 10, 21.) He is becoming weaker, paler and more and more indifferent, as days pass on. (I, 10, 27.) Knowing nothing as to what we should do, we have approached you." (I, 10, 41.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यत्प्रार्थनयाऽस्माकं निजव्यापारमाहिकम् ।

सोऽयमालानवदनः करोति न करोति वा ॥

स्नानदेवार्चनादानभोजनादिषु दुर्मेनाः ।

प्रार्थितोऽपि हि नातृत्तेरश्राव्यशनमीश्वरः ॥

लोलान्तःपुरनारिभिः कृतदोलाभिरङ्गणे ।

न च क्रीडति लीलाभिर्घारामिरिव चात्कः ॥

माणिक्यमुकुलप्रोता केयूरकटकावलिः ।

नानन्दयति तं राजन्ध्रौः पातविषयं यथा ॥



Having heard the above report, the king becomes very anxious and immediately sends for Rāma, in the presence of Vasiṣṭha, his family-priest. The latter asks Rāma, why he looked so unhappy. Thinking that Vasiṣṭha might throw light on his difficulties, Rāma gives expression to his pessimistic views of life. He thinks, in the same way as Gautama (Buddha) and Schopenhauer have also thought, that there is reign of misery and suffering everywhere in the world, for sickness, sorrow and death are constant companions of all worldly creatures. "What happiness can there be in this world, where every one is born to die? (I, 12, 7.) Everything comes into existence only to pass away. There is no stability in our achievements. (I, 12, 8.) How tantalizing are the pleasures of life. Prosperity is misery (in another form); pleasures are harbingers of pain; and life is meant only for death." (Vib, 93, 73.)<sup>1</sup> All creatures are steeped in dark

क्रीडद्भ्रुविलोकेषु वहत्कुमुमवासुषु ।  
 लतावलयगेहेषु भवत्यतिविषादवान् ॥  
 यद् द्रव्यमुचितं स्वाद् पेशलं चित्तहारि च ।  
 बाष्पपूर्णक्षणे इव तेनैव परिखिद्यते ॥  
 एकान्तेषु दिगन्तेषु तीरेषु विपिनेषु च ।  
 रतिमायात्यरण्येषु विकीत इव जन्तुषु ॥  
 प्रत्यहं कृशतामेति प्रत्यहं याति पाण्डुताम् ।  
 विरागं प्रत्यहं याति शरदन्त इव द्रुमः ॥  
 न विभ्रः किं महाबाहो तस्य तादृशचेतसः ।  
 कुर्मः कमलपत्राक्ष गतिरत्र हि नो भवान् ॥

किं नामेदं क्त सुखं येयं संसारसंततिः ।  
 जायते मृतये लोको म्रियते जननाय च ॥  
 अस्थिराः सर्वे एवेमे सचराचरचेष्टिताः ।  
 आपदां पतयः पापा भावा विभवभूमयः ॥  
 आपदः संपदः सर्वाः सुखं दुःखाय केवलम् ।  
 जीवितं मरणायैव क्त मायाविजृम्भितम् ॥

ignorance. "How deep is our ignorance! Although sold to none, we act as if we are bound and sold slaves. Knowing the vanity of the affairs of life, we continue to be whole-heartedly engaged in them like fools. (I, 12, 12.) Even knowing well that there cannot be real and lasting joy in our life, we foolishly stick to the hope of having it." (I, 12, 13.)<sup>1</sup> People spend their life in amassing wealth; but wealth is not a desirable thing. "The accumulation of wealth does not make us happy, but miserable, on the other hand. It hides within it the possibility of our ruin, like a poisonous creeper. (I, 13, 10.) It is very pleasant from a distance and so captivates our imagination. But in obtaining it one has to resort to undesirable means. It does not, when obtained, last long." (I, 13, 22.)<sup>2</sup> Life is hopelessly unstable. "It is evanescent as autumnal clouds, as the light of an oil-less lamp, and as the ripples on the surface of water. (I, 14, 6.) It is a worthless thing; it is meant for death only. There is nothing stable, good or desirable in it, although on the surface it appears to be stable and pleasant. (I, 14, 23.) It is being gradually eaten away by the rat of Time which is ceaselessly

<sup>1</sup> न केनचित् विक्रीता विक्रीता इव संस्थिताः ।

वत् मृदा वयं सर्वे जानाना अपि शाम्बरम् ॥

किमेतेषु प्रपञ्चेषु भोगा नाम मुदुर्भगाः ।

मुधैव हि वयं मोहात्संस्थिता बद्धभावनाः ॥

<sup>2</sup> न श्रीः सुखाय भगवन्दुःखायैव हि वर्धते ।

गुप्ता विनाशनं धत्ते मृति विषलता यथा ॥

मनोरमा कर्षति चित्तवृत्ति कदर्थसाध्या क्षणमङ्गुरा च ।

व्यालावलीगात्रविवृत्तदेहा श्वश्रोत्थिता पुष्पलतेव लक्ष्मीः ॥

busy with its work." (I, 14, 16.)<sup>1</sup> Our mind finds no rest anywhere. "Like a caged lion, it is always restless. (I, 16, 10.) It falls to objects as passionately as a bird to its prey, but it gets very soon disgusted with them, as a baby with his toys." (I, 16, 22.)<sup>2</sup> There is no ultimate satisfaction of desire. "Desire is as fickle as a monkey. It is never satisfied with the object which is already in hand, but jumps to other unattained ones. The more it is satisfied, the more intense it grows. (I, 17, 29.) Desire is as dangerous as a venomous serpent, which, although very appealing to the touch, stings fatally, when even slightly touched. (I, 17, 17.) Of all the evils of the world, desire is the most painful. It yokes to trouble even the most guarded people. (I, 17, 32.) The fire of desire burns our hearts so intensely that even nectar will not give us relief." (I, 17, 11.)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> पेलवं शरदीवाभ्रमलेह इव दीपकः ।  
 तरङ्गक इवालोऽलं गतमेवोपलक्ष्यते ॥  
 स्थिरतया मुखभासितया तथा सततमुज्झितमुत्तमफलम् च ।  
 जगति नास्ति तथा गुणवर्जितं मरणभाजनमायुरिदं यथा ॥  
 प्रत्यहं खेदमुत्सृज्य शनैरलमनारतम् ।  
 आसुनेव जरच्छृङ्खलं कालेन विनिहन्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> चेतश्चञ्चलया वृत्त्या चिन्तानिचयचञ्चुरम् ।  
 भृति वप्राति नैकत्र पञ्जरे केसरी यथा ॥  
 चेतः पतति कार्येषु विहगः स्वामिषेभिव ।  
 क्षणेन विरति याति बालः क्रीडनकादिव ॥

<sup>3</sup> पदं करोत्यलङ्घ्येऽपि तृप्ताऽपि फलमीहते ।  
 चिरं तिष्ठति नैकत्र तृष्णा चपलमर्कटी ॥  
 कुटिला कोमलस्पर्शा विषवैषम्यशंसिनी ।  
 दशत्यपि मनाक्स्पृष्टा तृष्णा कृष्णेव भोगिनी ॥



There is nothing good in the body, continues Rāmā-candra. All stages of its growth, viz., boyhood, youth and old age, are characterized by defects peculiar to themselves. "There is nothing desirable in the body. It is an abode of disease, a receptacle of all kinds of agonies and subject to wrinkles. (I, 18, 34.) What beauty can there be in the body which is made of flesh and blood and which is frail in its nature? (I, 18, 38.) Fie on them! who are intoxicated with the love of the world and put reliance on the stability of the body." (I, 18, 52.)<sup>1</sup> "Childhood is characterized by weakness, cravings, incapability to speak, lack of knowledge, longings for unattainable things, fickleness of the mind and helplessness. (I, 19, 2.) What delight should we have in that undesirable portion of our life called youth, which comes like a flash of lightning, soon to be inevitably followed by the thunder-claps of the agonies of old age? (I, 20, 8.) Youth is pleasing only for a short time at its commencement, but it soon turns into an evil, like the company of a harlot. (I, 20, 13.) The mind, however wide, clear and pure it may be, gets polluted

सर्वसंसारदोषाणां तृष्णैका दीर्घदुःखदा ।

अन्तःपुरस्थमपि या योजयत्यतिसंकटे ॥

तृष्णाभिधानया तात दग्धोऽस्मि ज्वाल्या तथा ।

यथा दाहोपशमनमाशङ्के नामृतैरपि ॥

<sup>1</sup> समस्तरोगायतनं वलीपलितपत्तनम् ।

सर्वाधिसारगहनं नेष्टं देहगृहं मम ॥

रक्तमांसमयस्यास्य सबाह्याभ्यन्तरं मुने ।

नाडीकधर्मिणो ब्रूहि कैव कायस्य रम्यता ॥

बद्धास्था ये शरीरेषु बद्धास्था ये जगत्स्थितौ ।

तान्मोहमदिरोन्मत्तान्विध्विगस्तु पुनः पुनः ॥



in youth like a river in the rainy season." (I, 20, 18.)<sup>1</sup> In youth man becomes fondly attached to the physical beauty of the other sex. But, "what beauty is there in the body of a woman which is simply a doll of flesh, blood, bone, etc.? (I, 21, 1.) Women appear charming only for some time and only to an unreflective mind. In reality there is no beauty in their body; it is due to our ignorance. (I, 21, 8.) This false and illusory beauty binds a man as strongly as a spell binds a snake . . ." (I, 21, 21.)<sup>2</sup> Bitterness of pain and suffering is the consequence of all worldly and sensual enjoyments. "The sensual enjoyments of life, which are flickering like the wings of a bee, are pleasant at their commencement only and turn bitter and unbearable at the end. I do not find any delight in them for fear of disease, decay and death." (I, 21, 36.)<sup>3</sup> Old age is

<sup>1</sup> अशक्तिरापदस्तृष्णा मूकता मूढबुद्धिता ।  
गृध्नुता लोलता दैन्यं सर्वं बाल्ये प्रवर्तते ॥  
निमेषभासुराकारमालोलवनगर्जितम् ।  
विद्युत्प्रकाशमशिवं यौवनं मे न रोचते ॥  
आपातमात्रमरणं सद्भावहरितान्तरम् ।  
वेश्यास्त्रीसंगमप्रस्थं यौवनं मे न रोचते ॥  
मुनिर्मलाऽपि विस्तीर्णा पावन्यपि हि यौवने ।  
मतिः कलुषतामेति प्रावृषीव तरङ्गिणी ॥

<sup>2</sup> मांसपाञ्चालिकायास्तु यन्त्रलोलेऽङ्गपञ्जरे ।  
स्नाय्वस्थिग्रन्थिशालिन्याः स्त्रियाः किमिव शोभनम् ॥  
आपातरमणीयत्वं कल्पते केवलं स्त्रियाः ।  
मन्ये तदपि नास्त्यत्र मुने मोहककारणम् ॥  
मन्दुरं व तुरङ्गाणामालानमिव दन्तिनाम् ।  
पुंसां मन्त्र इवाहीनां बन्धनं वामलोचना ॥

<sup>3</sup> आपातमात्रमरणेषु मुदुस्तरेषु भोगेषु नाहमलिपक्षतिचञ्चलेषु ।  
ब्रह्मन्मे मरणरोगजरादिभीत्या शाम्याम्यहं परमुपैमि पदं प्रयत्नात् ॥

the worst, but an inevitable thing in life. "The poor rat of youth is soon eaten away by the proud cat of old age, which takes delight in consuming the flesh of the body. (I, 22, 25.) Old age spares none. It overcomes even those heroes who never knew defeat in battle and catches hold of even those who may hide themselves in caves. (I, 22, 31.) It destroys the body as effectively as the falling snow destroys a lotus, as a gust of wind destroys an autumnal cloud. (I, 22, 2.) What is the good of living a life which is ever under the subjection of old age and death?" (I, 22, 38.)<sup>1</sup> Death reigns supreme everywhere. "There is nothing in the world which death does not devour. (I, 23, 4.) Of what value is the body, the pleasures, the wealth and the kingdom we may have, when, early or late, death shall put an end to all? (I, 18, 37.) The cruel hand of death is sure to remove everything. It only allows creatures to ripe for its own use, as it were." (I, 26, 6.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> जरामार्जारिका मुङ्क्ते यौवनाखुं तथोद्धता ।  
परमुल्लासमायाति शरीरामिषगर्धिनी ॥  
न जिताः शत्रुभिः संलये प्रविष्टा येऽद्रिकोटरे ।  
ते जराजीर्णराक्षस्या पश्यान्तु विजिता मुने ॥  
हिमाशनिरिवाम्भोजं वात्येव शरदम्बुकम् ।  
देहं जरा नाशयति नदी तीरतरुं यथा ॥  
किं तेन दुर्जीवितदुर्भ्रष्टेण जरागतेनापि हि जीव्यते यत् ।  
जरा जगत्यामजिता जनानां सर्वेषणास्तात तिरस्करोति ॥

<sup>2</sup> न तदस्तीह यदयं कालः सकलघस्मरः ।  
प्रसृते तज्जगज्जातं प्रोत्थाब्धिमिव बाहवः ॥  
किं श्रिया किं च राज्येन किं कायेन किमीहितैः ।  
दिनैः कतिपर्यैरेव कालः सर्वं निष्कृन्तति ॥  
प्रसृतिरेविरतं भूतजालं सर्प इवानलम् ।  
कृतान्तः कर्कशाचारो जरा नीत्वाऽजरं वपुः ॥

Everything is transitory. (I, 28, 1.) "Childhood, youth, body and riches, all are unstable. They unceasingly pass from one condition to another, like the waves of the ocean. (I, 28, 10.) Life is as unstable as the flame of a lamp placed in open air and the splendour of all objects is as momentary as the flash of lightning. (I, 28, 11.) We never find ourselves to be the same as in the previous moment. (I, 28, 32.) Our bodies change every moment; they quickly pass through the states of childhood, youth, old age and death. (I, 28, 37.) The mind also quickly changes from one state to another like an actor. It is now pleased, now annoyed, and now quiet. (I, 28, 38.) The Creator of the world seems to be like a playful child who quickly changes his toys, having soon become disgusted with them." (I, 28, 39.)<sup>1</sup>

All things of the world have an undesirable aspect. We find that "Life is fast fleeting; death is awfully

१ यच्चेदं दृश्यते किञ्चिज्जगत्स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।  
 तत्सर्वमस्थिरं ब्रह्मन्वप्रसंगमसंनिभम् ॥  
 अनित्यं यौवनं बाल्यं शरीरं द्रव्यसंचयाः ।  
 भावाद्वान्तरं यान्ति तरङ्गचदनारतम् ॥  
 वातान्तर्दीपकशिखालोलं जगति जीवितम् ।  
 तडित्स्फुरणसंकाशा पदार्थश्रीर्जगत्त्रये ॥  
 प्रागासीदन्य एवेह जातस्त्वन्यो नरो दिनैः ।  
 सदैकरूपं भगवन्किञ्चिदस्ति न सुस्थिरम् ॥  
 बाल्यमल्पदिनैरेव यौवनश्रीस्ततो जरा ।  
 देहेऽपि नैकरूपत्वं काऽऽस्था बाह्येषु वस्तुषु ॥  
 क्षणमानन्दितामेति क्षणमेति विषादिताम् ।  
 क्षणं सौम्यत्वमायाति सर्वस्मिन्नटवन्मनः ॥  
 इतश्चान्यदितश्चान्यदितश्चान्यदयं विधिः ।  
 रचयन्वस्तु नायाति खेदं लीलास्त्रिवार्भकः ॥



cruel; youth is extremely evanescent! (I, 26, 9.) Everything is under the sway of death and decay; all relations are chains of bondage; enjoyments are our fatal diseases; and desires are tantalizing mirages. (I, 26, 10.) Our senses are our enemies. What is believed to be true is soon discovered to be otherwise. (I, 26, 11.) All beings are mixed with non-being. All thinking is egoistic. (I, 26, 14.) All things come into existence only to disappear. Desires are chains that bind us to the world. All creatures are, as it were, being carried away, but none knows where. (I, 26, 22.) All human beings are self-deluded to be entrapped into the snares of desires and thereby to be afflicted with the troubles of birth and death. (I, 26, 41.) The indiscriminate creatures of the world come and go away, leaving room for others like the old leaves of trees. (I, 27, 18.) Sons, wives, riches, etc., are considered to be the elixir of life, but none of them can be of any ultimate good to us. They are no better than the temporary soothing sensations, during a prolonged swoon due to a doze of poison." (I, 27, 13.)<sup>1</sup> All things are defective, transitory,

<sup>1</sup> आयुरत्यन्तचपलं मृत्युरेकान्तनिष्ठुरः ।  
 तारुण्यं चातिरलं बाल्यं जडतया हृतम् ॥  
 कलाकलङ्कितो लोको बन्धवो भवबन्धनम् ।  
 भोगा भवमहारोगास्तृष्णाश्च मृगतृष्णिकाः ॥  
 शत्रवश्चेन्द्रियाण्येव सत्यं यातमसत्यताम् ।  
 प्रहृत्यात्मनैवात्मा मनसैव मनो रिपुः ॥  
 वस्त्वस्तुतया ज्ञातं दत्तं चित्तमहंकृतौ ।  
 अभाववेधिता भावा भावान्तो नाधिगम्यते ॥  
 आगमापायिनो भावा भावना भवबन्धनी ।  
 नीयते केवलं कापि नित्यं भूतपरम्परा ॥  
 सर्व एव नरा मोहाद् दुराशापाशपाशिनः ।  
 दोषगुल्मकसारान् विशीर्णा जन्मजङ्गले ॥



and so unsatisfactory. Man, on the other hand, aspires for perfection, perpetual joy and changelessness. He is therefore dissatisfied and hence miserable. "What direction", says Rāma, "is there, from which cries of suffering are not heard"? (I, 27, 31.)<sup>1</sup> Rāma found nothing good, beautiful or true in this world. He feels life to be full of misery, pain and suffering. It is not the possibility of the physical pains alone that made him so unhappy, but also the more unbearable pains of unfulfilled desires and ambitions and of finding the world falling short of the ideal state of goodness, beauty and truth. "I can", says he, "bear to be sawed alive! But the pain accruing from worldly desires and ambitions, and from the ways of the world is utterly unbearable." (I, 29, 17.)<sup>2</sup>

Rāma's vision of life may be well compared with that of Schopenhauer who says: "Everything in life shows that earthly happiness is destined to be frustrated and recognised as an illusion . . . Life presents itself as a continuous deception in small things as in great . . . The enchantment of distance shows us paradises which vanish like optical illusions, when we have allowed ourselves to be mocked by them. Life with its hourly, daily, weekly, yearly, little, great and greater misfortunes, with its deluded hopes and its accidents destroying all

पणानि जीर्णानि यथा तरूणां समेत्य जन्माशु लयं प्रयान्ति ।  
तथैव लोकाः स्वविवेकहीनाः समेत्य गच्छन्ति कुतोऽप्यहोमिः ॥  
पुत्राश्च दाराश्च धनं च बुद्ध्या प्रकल्प्यते तात रसायनाभम् ।  
सर्वं तु तन्नोपकरोत्यथान्ते यत्रातिरम्या विषमूर्च्छनैव ॥

<sup>1</sup> कास्ता दृशो यासु न सन्ति दोषाः कास्ता दिशो यासु न दुःखदाहः ।  
कास्ताः प्रजा यासु न भङ्गुरत्वं कास्ताः क्रिया यासु न नाम माया ॥

<sup>2</sup> ककचाग्रविनिष्पेपं सोढुं शक्नोम्यहं मुने ।  
संसारव्यवहारोत्थं नाशाविषयवशसम् ॥

our calculations, bears so distinctly the impression of something with which we must become disgusted, that it is hard to conceive how one has been able to mistake this and allow oneself to be persuaded that life is there in order to be thankfully enjoyed and that man exists in order to be happy. Rather that continual illusion and disillusion and also the nature of life throughout presents itself to us as intended and calculated to awaken the conviction that nothing at all is worth our striving, our efforts and struggles; that all good things are vanity, the world in all its ends bankrupt; and life a business which does not cover expenses." (*The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. III, 382f.)

Having thus given vent to his pessimistic vision of life, which was based on his observation and reflection, Rāma now enquires of Vasiṣṭha: "Is there any better state of existence, which may be free from suffering, ignorance and grief and be full of unconditional good? (I, 30, 11.) What is the most properly desirable end of life? How should one live in this inconsistent world? (I, 30, 20.) What is the spell by which the disease of worldliness—the source of all kinds of suffering—can be cured? (I, 30, 24.) How can one attain unchanging and perpetual joy within oneself? (I, 30, 25.) What is the method, what is the way, what is the science, and what is the art of saving this life from undesirable occurrences? (I, 31, 6.) In what way should a man live in this world, so that he may not be bound in it? (I, 30, 17.) How is it possible to enjoy this world, without, however, remaining in ignorance? (I, 31, 8.) How are those who live in this world to be saved from the pains consequent upon likes and dislikes, prosperity and pleasures? (I, 31, 12.) Let me know, Sir, the best possible secret of becoming free from the sufferings of life; whether it

be by oneself engaging in the activities of life or withdrawing from them." (I, 31, 17.)<sup>1</sup>

Rāma spoke thus from the very bottom of his heart. He felt his bondage very keenly and was extremely eager to get rid of it and to be free from the sufferings of life. This is evident from his concluding sentences, which illustrate the degree of *mumukṣutā* (desire to be free) one must have, before one can be free. His inquisitiveness reminds us of that of the boy Naciketas in the *Kāthopaniṣad*. He says in the end: "If there is no such secret in existence, or should there be one and nobody lets me know of it (I, 31, 20), or, if I myself do not acquire peace through my own

<sup>1</sup> अतोऽतुच्छमनायासमनुपाधि गतभ्रमम् ।  
 किं तत्स्थितिपदं साधो यत्र शोको न विद्यते ॥  
 किं तत्स्यादुचितं श्रेयः किं तत्स्यादुचितं फलम् ।  
 वर्तितव्यं च संसारे कथं नामासमञ्जसे ॥  
 केन पावनमन्त्रेण दुःसंस्तुतिविषूचिका ।  
 शाम्यतीयमनायासमायासशतकारिणी ॥  
 कथं शीतलतामन्तरानन्दतरुमञ्जरीम् ।  
 पूर्णचन्द्र इवाक्षीणां भृशमासादयाम्यहम् ॥  
 क उपायो गतिः का वा का चिन्ता कः समाश्रयः ।  
 केनेयमशुभोदका न भवेज्जीविताटवी ॥  
 संसार एव निवहे जनो व्यवहरन्नपि ।  
 न बन्धं कथमाप्नोति पद्मपत्रे पयो यथा ॥  
 अयं हि दग्धसंसारो नीरन्ध्रकलनाकुलः ।  
 कथं सुखादुत्तमेति नीरसो मूढतां विना ॥  
 रागद्वेषमहारोगा भोगपूगा विभूतयः ।  
 कथं जन्तुं न बाधन्ते संसारार्णवचारिणम् ॥  
 व्यवहारवतो युक्त्या दुःखं नायाति मे यया ।  
 अथ वा व्यवहारस्य हृतं तां युक्तिमुत्तमाम् ॥



attempts, I will give up all other activities and will become free from the ego even. (I, 31, 21.) I will not eat, drink, or dress. (I, 31, 22.) I will not engage myself in any work. I will not desire anything else than giving up the body. (I, 31, 23.) Having given up everything, I will give up this body as well." (I, 31, 26.)<sup>1</sup>

Vasiṣṭha was glad to find in Rāma a true disciple whose mind was ripe for receiving his philosophy.

१ अथ वा तादृशी युक्तिर्यदि ब्रह्मज्ञ विद्यते ।  
 न वक्ति मम वा कश्चिद्विद्यमानामपि स्फुटम् ॥  
 स्वयं चैव न चाप्नोमि तां विश्रान्तिमनुत्तमाम् ।  
 तदहं त्यक्तसर्वहो निरहंकारतां गतः ॥  
 न भोक्ष्ये न पिबाम्यम्बु नाहं परिदधेऽम्बरम् ।  
 करोमि नाहं व्यापारं ज्ञानदानाशनादिकम् ॥  
 न च तिष्ठामि कार्येषु संपत्स्वापइशानु च ।  
 न किञ्चिदपि वाञ्छामि देहत्यागादृते मुने ॥  
 नाहमस्य न मे नान्यः शम्याम्यक्लेहदीपवत् ।  
 सर्वमेव परित्यज्य त्यजामीदं कलेवरम् ॥



## CHAPTER II

### THE CAUSE AND REMEDY OF SUFFERING

THERE cannot be any denying the fact that there is suffering in life. There is evil and there is misery in this world. Recognition of this fact is the first of the four noble truths of *Buddhism*. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, agrees with Rāma that life, as it is lived by the ordinary man, is full of misery and troubles. The cause of suffering, he points out like the Buddha, is desire (*vasana*, *trṣṇā*, *raga*). "The desire for worldly objects", says Vasiṣṭha with all the emphasis at his command, "is the most dangerous enemy. It stings one like a venomous serpent; cuts like a sword; pierces like a lance; binds like a rope; burns like fire; blinds like a dark night; and grinds down its helpless victim like a heavy stone. It destroys his wisdom, upsets the balance of his mind, and throws him into the deep and dark well of infatuation. (II, 12, 14.) It causes him to suffer the pangs of hell." (II, 12, 15.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> विषमो ह्यतिसरां संसाररागो भोगीव दशति, असिरिव च्छिन्नति, कुन्त इव वेधयति, रज्जुरिवावेष्टयति, पावक इव दहति, रात्रिरिवान्धयति, अशङ्कितपरिपतित-पुरुषान्पाषाण इव विवशीकरोति, हरति प्रज्ञाम्, नाशयति स्थितिम्, पातयति मोहान्धकूपे, कृष्या जर्जरीकरोति, न तदस्ति किञ्चिद् दुःखं संसारी यन्न प्राप्नोति ॥

दुर्न्तेयं किल विषयविषूचिका यदि न चिकित्स्यते तन्नितरां नरकनगरनिकर-फलानुबन्धिनी तत्तत्करोति ॥

But why do we at all desire worldly objects, when desire makes us miserable? It is due to ignorance. We do not know the true nature of ourselves and the objects and of their relation to us and so we have a wrong attitude towards them. "The worst of all evils is ignorance. (VIa, 88, 27.) There is no end to the sufferings of the ignorant. (VIa, 6, 35.) The river of the worldly life flows on account of the follies of the ignorant." (VIa, 6, 33.)<sup>1</sup>

So the best and the only effective remedy of the sufferings of life is the removal of ignorance, which is the same as the attainment of wisdom (*jñāna*). "The poison of worldly life, from which all troubles proceed, affects only the ignorant. Effort, therefore, should be made to root it out. (II, 11, 69.) Sorrows do not approach the wise man, who has come to know what ought to be known and has a right attitude towards all things. (II, 11, 41.) Wisdom is the only way to cross over the ocean of the world. Penances, offerings, pilgrimage, etc., are of no avail. (II, 10, 22.) The state of *Nirvāṇa*, the Supreme Bliss, having attained which one no more experiences birth and death, is realized by wisdom alone." (II, 10, 21.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सर्वापदां शिरसि तिष्ठति मौर्ख्यमेकम् ॥

इदं दुर्दुःखमङ्गस्य न कदाचन शाम्यति ॥

इयं संसारस्तरणिर्वहस्यप्रमादतः ॥

<sup>2</sup> संसारविषकृशोऽयमेकमास्पदमापदाम् ।

अङ्गं संमोहयेन्नित्यं मौर्ख्यं यत्नेन नाशयेत् ॥

प्राज्ञं विज्ञातविज्ञेयं सम्यग्दर्शनमाधयः ।

न दहन्ति वनं वर्षासिक्तमग्निशिखा इव ॥

संसारोत्तरणे जन्तोरुपायो ज्ञानमेव हि ।

तपो दानं तथा तीर्थमनुपायाः प्रकीर्तिताः ॥

निर्वाणं नाम परमं सुखं येन पुनर्जनः ।

न जायते न म्रियते तज्ज्ञानादेव लभ्यते ॥

Wisdom really consists in knowing and realizing the true nature of the Self, by knowing which correctly we shall know everything else. "The knowledge of the Self is the real knowledge; all other kinds of knowledge are mere semblance of knowledge, as they do not attempt to find out the essence of reality which is the Self. (VIb, 21, 7.) One may rule over the whole world, yet he cannot attain peace unless he knows the Self. (IV, 57, 34.) The root of all suffering is cut off by the vision of the Self. (V, 75, 46.) Ignorance of the Self is the source of all troubles, and the knowledge of It is that of undecaying bliss and peace." (V, 5, 23.)<sup>1</sup>

१ आत्मज्ञानं विदुर्ज्ञानं ज्ञानान्यन्यानि यानि तु ।  
 तानि ज्ञानावभासानि सारस्यानवबोधनात् ॥  
 करोतु भुवने राज्यं विशत्वम्भोदमम्बु वा ।  
 नात्मलाभादते जन्तुर्विश्रान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥  
 आत्मावलोकने यत्नः कर्तव्यो भूतिमिच्छता ।  
 सर्वदुःखशिरश्छेद आत्मालोकेन जायते ॥  
 हे जना अपरिज्ञात आत्मा वो दुःखसिद्धये ।  
 परिज्ञातस्त्वनन्ताय सुखायोपशमाय च ॥



### CHAPTER III

#### EFFORT *VERSUS* DESTINY

SELF-KNOWLEDGE, which has been pointed out as the ultimate remedy for all sufferings of life, cannot be acquired by one who does not make effort, but merely depends upon fate or destiny to bring about his desired object. A large number of people believe in the agency of fate as making them fortunate or miserable and shirk their own responsibility for their being so, with the result that they go from bad to worse in the scale of life. Such people can neither achieve any remarkable success in the world, nor can they attain wisdom. This belief in the agency of some other unknown thing than our own selves in moulding our career, is responsible for numberless failures in the world. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, very strongly repudiates this view, at the very beginning of his teachings to Rāma. He is a staunch believer in the efficacy of effort and action in changing our condition. He thinks that every individual is wholly responsible for what he is. He believes in complete self-determination and the strength of every individual to overcome his miserable plight or to achieve anything he wants either in the realm of the world or in the kingdom of heaven. Fate, for him, is not a reality other than the results of our own previous actions, which every person is bound to have, but is at the same time quite free and strong enough to modify by



his present efforts. The following is a systematically arranged summary of his views on the subject:

"There is no other way to bring about the end of all misery than one's own effort (*puruṣa-yatna*). (III, 6, 14.) There is hardly anything in existence which is not attainable through right and earnest effort. (III, 92, 8.) Everything is always and fully attainable by proper effort. (II, 4, 8.) If any body aspires for anything and proceeds to attempt to achieve it, he shall have it, provided that he does not retrace his steps back on his way. (II, 4, 12.) It is through self-effort alone that Bṛhaspati has become the priest of the gods and Sūkra of the demons (II, 7, 7); Viṣṇu has established his victory over the demons, has established order in the world, through his effort only and not by depending on anything like fate. (II, 7, 31.) In the world quite a number of persons have risen from a very low condition of misery and poverty to positions of fortune fit to be compared to that of Indra. (II, 5, 27.) Through effort alone the wise always come out of dangerous situations, and not through the absurd belief in destiny. (II, 7, 18.) One gets only what he has striven for; nothing is ever achieved by sitting idly. (II, 7, 19.) Every one is his own friend or enemy; if one does not save himself, there is no other to save him. (VIb, 162, 18.) It is our own efforts that bring victory over our undesirable condition without fail. (III, 92, 19.) One should, therefore, learn to be active along the right direction." (III, 92, 28.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> अत्रैकं पौरुषं यत्नं वर्जयित्वेतरा गतिः ।

सर्वदुःखक्षयप्राप्तौ न काचिदुपपद्यते ॥

न तदस्ति जगत्कोशे शुभकर्मनिपातिना ।

यत्पौरुषेण युद्धेन न समासाद्यते जनैः ॥

"He is a great fool undoubtedly, who relies on fate, or believes that God will throw him capriciously in hell or heaven. (II, 6, 27.) He who believes, that there is some other agency, which is compelling him to think evil thoughts and to do undesirable acts, and so, gives up his own effort, which is so palpable, is a very wretched man, whose company should always be avoided. (II, 6, 29.) There is none among the brave, the successful, the learned and the wise, who ever waits for destiny. (II, 8, 17.) They who always depend on fate, lose all their merit, wealth and enjoyments. They are,

सर्वमेवेह हि सदा संसारे रघुनन्दन ।  
 सम्यक्प्रयुक्तात्सर्वेण पौरुषात्समवाप्यते ॥  
 यो यमर्थं प्रार्थयते तदर्थं चेहते क्रमात् ।  
 अवश्यं स तमाप्नोति न चेदर्धान्विवर्तते ॥  
 पुरुषार्थेन देवानां गुरुरेव बृहस्पतिः ।  
 शुक्रो दैत्येन्द्रगुक्तां पुरुषार्थेन चास्थितः ॥  
 पौरुषेण जिता दैत्याः स्थापिता भुवनक्रियाः ।  
 रचितानि जगन्तीह विष्णुना न च दैवतः ॥  
 दैन्यदारिद्र्यदुःखार्ता अप्यन्ये पुरुषोत्तमाः ।  
 पौरुषेणैव यत्नेन याता देवेन्द्रतुल्यताम् ॥  
 पौरुषेण दुरन्तेभ्यः संकटेभ्यः सुबुद्धयः ।  
 समुत्तरन्त्ययत्नेन न तु मोघतयाऽनया ॥  
 यो यो यथा प्रयतते स स तत्तत्फलकमाक् ।  
 न तु तूष्णीं स्थितेनेह केनचित्प्राप्यते फलम् ॥  
 आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।  
 आत्माऽऽत्मना न चेत्त्रातस्तेदुपायोऽस्ति नेतरः ॥  
 पुरुषातिशयः सर्वः सर्वभावोपमर्दने ।  
 दद्याद्यविघ्नेन फलं मनो हि मनसो मुने ॥  
 मनसैव मनस्तस्मात्पौरुषेण पुमानिह ।  
 स्वकमेव स्वकेनैव योजयेत्पावने पथि ॥

in fact, their own enemies. (II, 7, 3.) The fools who believe that everything is in the hands of destiny are utterly ruined." (II, 5, 29.)<sup>1</sup>

"There does not exist anything like fate or destiny (II, 5, 18 and II, 8, 13). It is absolutely unreal. (II, 8, 11.) The hypothesis of fate is unwarranted, for everywhere we see that activity alone brings about results, and where activity is absent, as in the case of a corpse, no agency of fate is ever observed to produce anything. (II, 8, 8.) Fate does not do anything; it exists only in imagination. (II, 9, 3.) Fools alone imagine the existence of fate and are ruined by their imagination. (II, 8, 16.) Apart from being a consolatory contrivance, destiny has no reality of its own." (II, 8, 15.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ईश्वरप्रेरितो गच्छेत्स्वर्गं नरकमेव वा ।

स सदैव पराधीनः पशुरेव न संशयः ॥

कश्चिन्मां प्रेरयत्येवमित्यनर्थकुक्कल्पने ।

यः स्थितो दृष्टमुत्सृज्य त्याज्योऽसौ दूरतोऽध्वमः ॥

ये शूरा ये च विक्रान्ता ये प्राज्ञा ये च पण्डिताः ।

तैस्तैः किमिव लोकेऽस्मिन्वद देवं प्रतीक्ष्यते ॥

ये समुद्योगमुत्सृज्य स्थिता देवपरायणाः ।

ते धर्ममर्थं कामं च नाशयन्त्यात्मविद्रिषः ॥

देवात्तमिति मन्यन्ते ये हतास्ते कुलुद्भयः ।

<sup>2</sup> देवं नाम न किञ्चन ॥

देवं न विद्यते ॥

देवमसत्सदा ॥

न च निस्पन्दता लोके दृष्टेह शक्ततां विना ॥

स्पन्दाच्च फलसंप्राप्तिस्तस्माद्देवं निरर्थकम् ।

देवं न किञ्चित्कुरुते . . . केवलं कल्पनेद्दृशी ॥

मूढैः प्रकल्पितं देवं तत्परास्ते क्षयं गताः ॥

समाश्वासनवागेषा न देवं परमार्थतः ॥



"Destiny is nothing but what inevitably happens as the good or bad result of our efforts already put forth. (II, 9, 4.) The attainment of the fruits of our labours is destined and so it is termed destiny. (II, 9, 5.) If anything is sure to happen as a result of one's efforts, it is said to be destined. (II, 9, 6.) Actions previously done with will and determination and now ready to fructify are our destiny. (II, 9, 16.) Expressions, such as 'It shall be so' and 'It is thus determined,' in cases where the results of our efforts are completely and surely predictable, have given rise to the conception of destiny. (II, 8, 2.) Ignorant people have, on the basis of such expressions, come to believe in the reality of fate as a self-subsisting entity, in the same way as one perceives a snake in a rope where there is none. (II, 8, 3.) The real fact is that there is no other destiny than our own past efforts, fructifying now in good or bad results. (II, 6, 4.) Our (previous) actions alone constitute our destiny. (II, 6, 35.) As one endeavours, so he achieves." (II, 6, 2.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what Kingsland says of destiny: "Destiny is simply the limitation imposed by an already exercised freedom of choice, or what is commonly called free-will." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 353.)

<sup>1</sup> सिद्धस्य पौरुषेणेह फलस्य फलशालिना ।

शुभाशुभार्थसंपत्तिर्देवशब्देन कथ्यते ॥

पौरुषोपनता नित्यमिष्टानिष्टस्य वस्तुनः ।

प्राप्तिरिष्टाऽप्यनिष्टा वा देवशब्देन कथ्यते ॥

भावी त्ववश्यमेवार्थः पुरुषार्थैकसाधनः ।

यः सोऽस्मिन्नं लोकसंघाते देवशब्देन कथ्यते ॥

यदेव तीव्रसंवेगाद् दृढं कर्मकृतं पुनः ।

तदेव देवशब्देन पर्यायेणेह कथ्यते ॥



This being the true meaning of destiny, "It can be overcome by our present efforts as easily as a child by a grown up man. (II, 6, 4.) The efforts already made in some direction (now our destiny) and the efforts now being made in a contrary direction oppose each other like two contesting rams; and those which are stronger will surely vanquish the others. (II, 6, 10.) Just as the wrong acts of yesterday can be rectified to-day, so the present efforts can rectify the previous ones. (VIb, 157, 29.) It is the stronger of the two—the past and the present efforts—which subdue the result of the other. In either case, however, it is our own effort that succeeds. (II, 6, 18.) Further, it is quite evident, that of the two—the past and the present—the present effort can be stronger and can succeed against the other, as a youth can defeat a child." (II, 6, 19.)<sup>1</sup> For, the past has been what it is, but the future is still undetermined.)

स्वकर्मफलसंप्राप्ताविदमित्यमितीति याः ।  
 गिरस्ता देवनाम्नैताः प्रसिद्धिं सुमुपागताः ॥  
 तत्रैव मूढमतिभिर्देवमस्तीति निश्चयः ।  
 आत्तो दुरवबोधेन रज्ज्वाभिव भुजङ्गमः ॥  
 प्राक्स्वकर्मंतराकारं देवं नाम न विद्यते ॥  
 प्राक्तनं पौरुषं तद्वै देवशब्देन कथ्यते ॥  
 यथा यथा प्रयत्नः स्याद्भवेदाशु फलं तथा ।  
 इति पौरुषमेवास्ति दैवमस्तु तदेव च ॥

<sup>1</sup> बालः प्रबलपुंसेव तज्जंतुभिर्ह शक्यते ॥  
 द्वौ वृद्धाविव युज्येते पुरुषार्थौ परस्परम् ।  
 य एव बलवांस्तत्र स एव जयति क्षणात् ॥  
 ह्यस्तनी दुष्क्रियाऽभ्येति शोभां सत्क्रियया यथा ।  
 अदैव प्राक्तनीं तस्माद्यज्ञात्सकार्यवान्भव ॥

"One should, therefore, set to overcome his undesirable destiny by having recourse to greater effort with unflinching and strong determination. (II, 5, 9.) The idea, that our past acts prompt us to undesirable ends, should be suppressed and rooted out, for in no case can past actions have greater force than the present ones. (II, 5, 10.) Every one should exert oneself to the extent of completely eradicating the evil effects of one's previous acts. (II, 5, 11.) There is hardly any doubt that the evils, which are the legacy of the past, can be absolutely destroyed by efforts in the living present." (II, 5, 12.)<sup>1</sup>

One must also remember that all efforts are not productive of a particular result. There are some, which are most appropriate for the purpose and others, which are not so. It will be a mere waste of energy and its dissipation in wrong directions, if wrong efforts are made. One should, therefore, first know the scientific (*Sastrita*) method of attaining the object of his desire, before he proceeds to make effort to attain it. "Efforts

ऐहिकः प्राक्तनं हन्ति प्राक्तनोऽद्यतनं बलात् ।

सर्वदा पुरुषस्पन्दस्तत्रानुदेगवाञ्जयी ॥

द्वयोरद्यतनस्यैव प्रत्यक्षाद्वलिता भवेत् ।

दैवं जेतुं यतो यत्नैर्बालो यूनेव शक्यते ॥

<sup>1</sup> परं पौरुषमाश्रित्य दन्तैर्दन्तान्विचूर्णयन् ।

शुभेनाशुभमुद्युक्तं प्राक्तनं पौरुषं जयेत् ॥

प्राक्तनः पुरुषार्थोऽसौ मां नियोजयतीति धीः ।

बलादधस्पदीकार्या प्रत्यक्षादधिका न सा ॥

तावत्तावत्प्रयत्नेन यतितव्यं सुपौरुषम् ।

प्राक्तनं पौरुषं यावदशुभं शाम्यति स्वयम् ।

दोषः शाम्यत्यसंदेहं प्राक्तनोऽद्यतनैर्गुणैः ॥

may be scientific (*Sāstrita*) and unscientific (*Uc-chāstra*). The former tend to bring about the desirable results, the latter, evil ones. (II, 5, 4.) One should have recourse only to proper efforts." (II, 6, 24.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> उच्छास्त्रं शास्त्रितं चेति द्विविधं पौरुषं स्मृतम् ।  
 तत्रोच्छास्त्रमनर्थाय परमार्थाय शास्त्रितम् ॥  
 तस्मात्पौरुषमाश्रित्य सच्छास्त्रैः सत्समागमैः ।  
 प्रज्ञाममलतां नीत्वा संसारजलधिं तरेत् ॥

## CHAPTER IV

### PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENTS OF THE ASPIRANT AFTER SELF-KNOWLEDGE

SELF-KNOWLEDGE—the remedy of all suffering, evil and bondage according to Vasiṣṭha—dawns upon that mind alone, which has been prepared for it. It requires a peculiar temperament and training, which have to be acquired and undergone before the vision of the Self dawns. Unless he is already prepared, intellectually and morally for it, the teaching of a teacher in the science of the Self falls flat on the pupil. "The words of a teacher settle down in one's mind, only when it is calm and free from craving for objects of pleasure and when attachment to the objects of senses is given up. (VIa, 101, 10-11.) When the mind is purified by casting off the impurities of worldly desires, everything heard from the teacher is grasped very easily." (VIa, 101, 14.)<sup>1</sup> Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan likewise says: "To realise the supreme spirit a certain purifying of the mind is necessary". (*An Idealist View of Life*, p. 334.) "Unless the mind is set free and casts away all desire and anxiety,

<sup>1</sup> मनस्युपशमं याते त्यक्तभोगैषणे स्थिते ।  
कषायपाके निवृत्ते सर्वेन्द्रियगणस्य च ॥  
यान्ति चेतसि विभ्रान्ति विमला देशिकोक्तयः ।  
यथा सितांशुके शुद्धे बिन्दवः कुंकुमाम्भसः ॥  
वासनात्मसु यातेषु मलेषु विमलं सखे ।  
यद्वक्ति गुरुरन्तस्तद्विशतीषुर्वथा विसे ॥



all interest and regret, it cannot enter the world of pure being and reveal it." (*Ibid.*, p. 157.) In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, however, we do not find any elaborate scheme of preliminary requirements, such as, in later times, we find in the school of Śaṅkara, under the name of the *sādhana-catuṣṭaya* (the four requirements)—(i) *Viveka* (discrimination), (ii) *Vairāgya* (disinterestedness), (iii) the Six attainments, namely, *Sama* (quietness of mind), *Dama* (control over the senses), *Titikṣā* (power of bearing the extremes of heat and cold, etc.), *Uparati* (being above the temptation for the enjoyment of worldly objects), *Sraddha* (faith in the instructor and the Scripture), and *Samādhāna*, and (iv) *Mumukṣā* (strong desire to attain liberation)—but there is only a statement of four preliminary qualities required by one who wants to be free. The author calls them "the four gate-keepers of Liberation (*mokṣa-dvāra-pālah*)" or "the four methods of proceeding to attain liberation". They are not all compulsory, as the above-mentioned requirements of Śaṅkara's school, but optional, for it is said that, if any one of them is well-acquired, the other three will follow. Thus we find: "There are four methods of crossing over the ocean of worldly existence, namely, Tranquillity (*sama*), Contentment (*saṁtoṣa*), Company of the good or the wise (*sādhu-saṅga*), and Thinking (*vicāra*). (II, 16, 18.) They are so related to one another that, if one of them is fully acquired, others will inevitably accompany it. One should, therefore, make effort in acquiring any one of them thoroughly." (II, 16, 22.)<sup>1</sup>

संतोषः साधुसङ्गश्च विचारोऽयमस्तथा ।

एत एव भवाम्भोधावुपायास्तरणे नृणाम् ॥

एकोऽप्येकोऽपि सर्वेषामेषां प्रसवभूतिव ।

सर्वसंसिद्धये तस्माद्यत्नेनैकं समाश्रयेत् ॥

A detailed description of each one of them is given as follows :

### 1. *Tranquillity* :

"Truth dawns by itself upon the mind of the tranquil, who are equally good and friendly to all beings. (II, 13, 60.) Tranquillity is the most desirable state of existence; through it one attains the *summum bonum* of life; it is the harbinger of beatitude and peace, (II, 13, 52.) He is said to be tranquil, who is impartial to all creatures, who neither desires nor denounces any object and remains a master of his senses (II, 13, 73); whose mind is unruffled even in the midst of death, festivities or war (II, 13, 75); and who is not cast down even during unending troubles and ravages of time." (II, 13, 79.)<sup>1</sup>

"Such a person will always and everywhere be happy. (II, 13, 6.) Even the riches of all the three worlds and the prosperity of an extensive empire cannot make a man so happy as the possession of tranquillity. (II, 13, 57.) Even ghosts, cannibals, demons, enemies,

१ शमशालिनि सौहार्दवति सर्वेषु जन्तुषु ।  
 मुजने परमं तत्त्वं स्वयमेव प्रसीदति ॥  
 शमेनासाद्यते श्रेयः शमो हि परमं पदम् ।  
 शमः शिवः शमः शान्तिः शमो भ्रान्तिनिवारणम् ॥  
 यः समः सर्वभूतेषु भावि काक्षति नोञ्जति ।  
 जित्वेन्द्रियाणि यत्नेन स शान्त इति कथ्यते ॥  
 तुषारकरबिम्बामं मनो यस्य निराकुलम् ।  
 मरणोत्सवयुक्तेषु स शान्त इति कथ्यते ॥  
 अप्यापत्सु दुरन्तासु कल्पान्तेषु महत्स्वपि ।  
 तुच्छेऽहं न मनो यस्य स शान्त इति कथ्यते ॥

tigers, serpents, etc., cannot harm a man of tranquillity." (II, 13, 66.)<sup>1</sup>

## II. *Contentment* :

"Wisdom never dawns upon the mind, which is under the control and at the mercy of desires and expectations and is destitute of contentment. (II, 15, 9.) All kinds of prosperity wait upon the contented man. (II, 15, 16.) He is said to be contented, who is not desirous of what he has not got, is quite unaffected by what he has got, and never experiences elation or dejection." (II, 15, 6.)<sup>2</sup>

## III. *The Company of the Wise* (literally, *the good*) :

"The company of the wise removes the darkness of the heart; leads one to the right way, and causes the sun of wisdom to shine in one's mind. (II, 16, 9.) He who bathes in the cool and holy Ganges of the

<sup>1</sup> परित्यक्तसमस्तेहं मनो गधुरवृत्तिमत् ।

सर्वतः सुखमभ्येति चन्द्रमिव इव स्थितम् ॥

त्रैलोक्योदरवर्तिन्यो नानन्दाय तथा श्रियः ।

साम्राज्यसंपत्प्रतिमा यथा शमविभूतयः ॥

न पिशाचा न रक्षांसि न दैत्या न च शत्रवः ।

न च व्याघ्रमुजङ्गा वा द्विपन्ति शमशालिनम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> आशवैवश्यविवशे चित्ते संतोषवर्जिते ।

म्लाने यक्त्रमिवादर्शे न ज्ञानं प्रतिबिम्बति ॥

संतोषपुष्टमनसं मूला इव महर्द्धयः ।

राजानमुपतिष्ठन्ति किकरत्वमुपागताः ॥

अप्राप्तवान्छामुत्सृज्य संप्राप्ते समतां गतः ।

अदृष्टखेदास्त्रेदो यः स संतुष्ट इहोच्यते ॥

company of the wise, does not stand in need of penances, pilgrimage, charity or sacrifices." (II, 16, 10.)<sup>1</sup>

#### IV. *Thinking*:

"Truth cannot be known without thinking. (II, 14, 52.) Thinking leads us to the attainment of peace. (II, 14, 53.) Thinking consists in logical investigation into the problems: 'What am I?' and 'How has this world-evil come into existence?'" (II, 14, 50.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> साधुसंगतयो लोके सन्मार्गस्य च दीपिकाः ।

हृदार्थान्वकारहारिण्यो भासो ज्ञानविवस्वतः ॥

यः स्वातः शीतसितया साधुसंगतिगङ्गया ।

किं तस्य दानैः किं तीर्थैः किं तपोभिः किमध्वरैः ॥

<sup>2</sup> न विचारादते तत्त्वं ज्ञायते साधु किंचन ।

विचाराज्ज्ञायते तत्त्वं तत्त्वाद्विश्रान्तिरात्मनि ॥

कोऽहं कथमयं दोषः संसाराख्य उपागतः ।

न्यायेनेति परामर्शो विचार इति कथ्यते ॥





PART II  
METAPHYSICS



## CHAPTER I

### THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE METHOD OF IMPARTING IT

KNOWLEDGE, particularly Self-knowledge, which is the essence and foundation of all knowledge, has, as we have already seen, been said to be the ultimate cure of all evils and sufferings of life. But what is the source of knowledge? The problem of the source of knowledge—the '*Pramāṇa*'—has been a very interesting problem in Indian philosophy. Various schools of Indian Thought have offered different views with regard to the source of knowledge. The Cārvākas, for example, have held that Sense-perception is the only source of valid knowledge. The Buddhists believe that Sense-perception alone does not suffice, but Inference also is required. According to the Sāṃkhya view, Perception, Inference and the Scripture are the three sources of our knowledge. The Naiyāyikas hold that Comparison (*Upamāna*) must also be admitted as one of the sources of knowledge, in addition to the three already mentioned. The Prābhākara school of Mimāṃsā adds one more, namely, Presumption (*Arthapatti*) to the list of the Naiyāyikas, and the Bhāṭṭa school of Mimāṃsā makes them six by adding Non-apprehension (*Anupalabdhi*) to the other five. The followers of Sāṃkhya have accepted all the six—Perception (*Pratyakṣa*),



Inference (*Anumāna*), the Scripture (*Śabda*), Comparison (*Upamāna*), Presumption (*Arthapatti*), and Non-apprehension (*Anupalabdhi*)—as the proper sources of our knowledge. They, as also other Vedāntins, however, believe that the Scripture (the *Śruti*) is the only and the ultimate source of the knowledge of the Ultimate Reality (the Brahman). The number of *Pramāṇas* went on increasing until it reached ten, by the addition of Tradition (*Āitiḥya*), Inclusion (*Sambhava*), Gesture (*Ceṣṭa*) and Elimination (*Pariseṣa*), as sources of knowledge.

Unfortunately, we do not find in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* any criticism of any one of the above-mentioned views. But we find Vasiṣṭha very emphatically asserting that Direct Cognition (*Pratyakṣa* or *Anubhava*) is the only and the ultimate source of all our knowledge, be it of an external object, the Self or God. Experience is the final test of all our knowledge or beliefs. He does not believe in any other *pramāṇa* as the source of new knowledge. "There is no other *pramāṇa* of what is said here than *Pratyakṣa*. (III, 42, 15.) There is only one source of knowledge, viz., *Pratyakṣa*, which is the ground and source of all other *Pramāṇas*, as the ocean is the ultimate source of all waters." (II, 19, 16.)<sup>1</sup> Bergson says, "An absolute can only be given in an intuition" (Bergson: *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 6), and "Philosophy consists in placing oneself within the object itself by an effort of intuition." (*Ibid.*, p. 37.) So we read in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*: "He alone knows the Absolute Reality who knows it by direct intuition,

<sup>1</sup> प्रमाणमत्र शृणु मे प्रत्यक्षं नाम नेतरत् ।

सर्वप्रमाणसत्तानां पदमध्विरपामिव ।

प्रमाणमेकमेवेह प्रत्यक्षं तदतः शृणु ॥

placing and merging himself in it; others only repeat the words of the Scriptures. (Vib, 52, 29.)<sup>1</sup> Vasiṣṭha does not think, as the Naiyāyikas do, that God's existence and attributes can be known through Inference, or as the Vedāntins think that the Scripture alone gives us the knowledge of God, or that God can be known by any other means than one's own vision of Him. He says positively: "Inference and the Scriptures cannot show us God (Paramesvara). He is always and fully revealed only in our intuition of Him. (V, 73, 15.) No teacher or Scripture can ever show us God. He is seen by one as one's own Self, through one's own developed and purified intuition." (VIa, 118, 4.)<sup>2</sup> If the Self or anything else is not directly known, it can never be made known by any description of it, given by the Scriptures or anybody else. "The taste of sugar can never be made known to one who has not himself tasted it. In the same manner, the nature of the Self cannot be known without direct intuition of it." (V, 64, 53.)<sup>3</sup> We find Rabindra-nāth Tagore saying the same thing, "The vision of the Supreme One in our soul is a direct and immediate intuition, not based on any ratiocination or demonstration at all." (Tagore: *Sadhana*, p. 36.) Compare also what a modern Western

<sup>1</sup> तद्विदा तत्पदस्येन तन्मुक्तेनानुभूयते ।

अन्यैः केवलमाम्नातैरगमैरेव वर्ण्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> नात्माऽस्त्यनुमया राम न चाप्तवचनादिना ।

सर्वदा सर्वथा सर्वं स प्रत्यक्षोऽनुभूतिः ॥

न शास्त्रेर्नापि गुरुणा दृश्यते परमेश्वरः ।

दृश्यते स्वात्मनैवात्मा स्वया सत्त्वस्थथा धिया ॥

<sup>3</sup> अनुभूतिं विना तत्त्वं खण्डादेर्नानुभूयते ।

अनुभूतिं विना रूपं नात्मनश्चानुभूयते ॥

author writes: "The deepest secrets of Nature, the great structural facts of the Universe, are not matters of physics and chemistry, nor can they be ever demonstrated to the intellect like a proposition of Euclid. They are living facts, fatefully connected with the life of each individual, and only to be discovered and demonstrated within the individual, by and for himself. They are matters to be experienced rather than demonstrated; not by an intellectual apprehension of truth merely, but by a living and vital contact therewith." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 64.)

According to Vasiṣṭha thus, *Pratyakṣa* is the ultimate and the only source of knowledge. But by *Pratyakṣa* Vasiṣṭha does not mean merely sense-perception like the Cārvākas. It is described by him as "the essence (*sāra*) and supervisor (*adhyakṣa*) of all the senses; feeling (*vedana*); experience (*anubhūti*); awareness (*pratipatti*); and consciousness (*samvid*). It is the Jiva—the living principle; it is the person (*puman*); it is that which is named as "I". Its modifications arise as the objects and are called things (*padarthas*)." (II, 19, 17-19.)<sup>1</sup> There is hardly any one word in English which can express the idea. Intuition probably may be a better term than any other, although it too fails to bring out the full meaning of Vasiṣṭha's "*Pratyakṣa*".

<sup>1</sup> सर्वोक्षसारमध्यक्षं वेदनं विदुरुत्तमाः ।

नूनं तत्प्रतिपत्तिर्द्वं तत्प्रत्यक्षमुदाहृतम् ॥

अनुभूतेर्वेदनस्य प्रतिपत्तेर्यथाभिधम् ।

प्रत्यक्षमिति नामेह कृतं जीवः स एव नः ॥

स एव संवित्स पुमानहंताप्रत्ययात्मकः ।

स योदेति संवित्स्या सा पदार्थ इति स्मृता ॥



This being the case with all our knowledge, it is really impossible to impart to a person any knowledge of anything of which he has had no direct experience. Who can, for example, make any body understand what a toothache is, if the latter has never experienced toothache himself? But, if it were absolutely impossible, our knowledge would not advance, and we would never have become conscious of the many aspects of our experience, of which we are reminded by those who have already become aware of them. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, thinks that a partial knowledge or hint of things not already known, can be given through similes (*drṣṭānta*) and analogies (*upamāna*), for the similarity thus pointed out helps one in cognizing directly the thing suggested. "No one", says Vasiṣṭha, "can be made acquainted with an object of which he never had the direct vision, except through some similar example (*drṣṭānta*). (II, 18, 51.) A familiar similar example can help one to a certain extent to imagine the nature of an object never directly known before." (II, 18, 50.)<sup>1</sup> "It (Intuition) is expressed and transmuted" says Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan, "not by means of precise scientific statements, but by myth and image, literature and art". (*An Idealist View of Life*, p. 144.)

It is also to be remembered that only some aspects, and not all, of the similar or analogical instances are to be taken into consideration. "As no similar example can be an identical substitute of that which is exemplified (II, 18, 66), the similarity between the analogical instance and the real thing should be understood only

<sup>1</sup> दृष्टान्तेन विना राम नापूर्वार्थोऽवबुध्यते ।

येनेहानुभूतेऽर्थे दृष्टेनार्थेन बोधनम् ।

बोधोपकारफलदं ते दृष्टान्तं विदुर्बुधाः ॥



partially, and not wholly." (II, 18, 64.)<sup>1</sup> Similes and metaphors, it must never be forgotten, are not meant in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* to prove anything, but to illustrate.

The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, expounded in the following pages, is thus not the result of discursive thought moving along Inferential lines like the Nyāya system, nor is it based on the speculations of the *Sruti*, or the interpretation of its evidence like the Vedānta system of philosophy. For Vasiṣṭha does not believe in the ultimate authority of the Scripture, nor does he seem to think that Inference leads to anything new. Inference, he appears to think, always presupposes a generalization on the basis of previous experience, and therefore does not go beyond it. The statements of the *Upaniṣads* are likewise based on the direct experience of the ancient sages. The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha is a vision of life as it is and as it can be. He is a sage who directly knows all sides of life, actual and possible, and gives us what he sees, with the help of illustrations and similes, in a language which is partly philosophical and partly poetical. What has really advanced human knowledge is not logic or argumentation so much as vision. If a philosopher lacks in the vision of reality, he is not worth the name. Kingsland has rightly observed: "What has been accepted of the great philosophers, has not been so much their method as some mystic vision of Truth, intuitively grasped, even though inadequately proved." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 139.)

<sup>1</sup> एकदेशसमर्थत्वादुपमेयावबोधनम् ।

उपमानं करोत्यङ्ग दीपोऽर्थप्रभया यथा ॥

उपमेयस्योपमानादेकांशेन सर्वमता ।

अङ्गीकार्याऽवबोधाय धीमता निर्विवादिना ॥

## CHAPTER II

### IDEALISM (KALPANĀ-VĀDA)

THE chief and the most important aspect of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha is his Idealism which may better be called "Imaginism" in the language of Fawcett. It is really the keystone of the entire structure of his philosophy—the basic principle from which everything else will follow. For him, it is the key which unlocks all the enigmas of life and the explanation of all the riddles of existence. We shall, therefore, begin the study of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha with that of his Idealism.

The philosophical system of Vasiṣṭha, as we have already noted, is an interpretation of or investigation into the nature of experience. Let us, therefore, find out how Vasiṣṭha has understood experience as a whole. The first revelation of experience, no doubt, is a multiplicity of individuals and things of which the world is full. Our reflective consciousness, however, reduces this plurality of the experienced world to a duality of the subject (the knower) and the object (*i.e.*, all things that are known). Vasiṣṭha further asks: Is the duality of subject and object ultimate? Are the knower and the known ultimately two separate things having no identity or common reality in and behind them? Is the subject absolutely distinct in nature from the object? Green raises the same problem and comes to a Spiritual Monism in his *Prolegomena to Ethics*. Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan

raises the same problem in his *Indian Philosophy* while reviewing the Pluralism of Jainism and answers thus: "The dualism of mind and external world, whatever truth it may have at the psychological level, is overcome, when we rise to the standpoint of logic as theory of knowledge. If the two, subject and object, the individual mind and the independent reality, are separate, then there can be no knowledge at all. Either knowledge is arbitrary and groundless, or the dualism is wrong. Subject and object are not separate existences, held together by an external bond. They are a unity in duality, a duality in unity . . . The distinction of subject and object is not a relation between two independent entities, but a distinction made by knowledge within its own field." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 306.) At another place he says: "Thought is able to reveal reality, because they are one in essence". (*An Idealist View of Life*, p. 138.) Also "knowledge presupposes a unity between subject and object; without this basis knowledge is impossible . . . The interpretability of nature is a proof positive of the kinship of object with the subject, nature with mind." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 431.) This is very much similar to what Vasiṣṭha thought long ago. "The subject cannot be aware of the object unless they are related. And there cannot exist any relation between two heterogeneous things. (III, 121, 37.) Relation implies identity, for it cannot be possible between two utterly different objects. (III, 121, 42.) Only those things which are homogeneous in their nature can come in contact with each other. The cognition of the object by the subject, therefore, establishes their substantial identity. (VIb, 25, 14.) If they were utterly different



from each other, knowledge would not have been possible; the subject would ever remain unaware of the object as a stone of the taste of sugar." (VIb, 38, 9.)<sup>1</sup> Some sort of unity is, therefore, to be postulated as existing in and behind both the subject and the object. "There is a unity in and behind the subject, object and their relation, which in its nature is beyond the three, yet which exists in them. (III, 121, 53.)"<sup>2</sup> Bradley also seems to think like Vasiṣṭha when he writes: "A relation between A and B implies really a substantial foundation within them." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 22.) And "Relations are unmeaning except within and on the basis of a substantial whole." (*Ibid*, p. 142). Aliotta similarly says: "We cannot possibly understand how that which is absolutely outside consciousness can stand in any sort of relation to feeling and imagination, the most intimate and subjective functions of the mind of man." (Aliotta: *The Idealistic Reaction Against Science*, p. 17.)

But can we have any positive conception of this all-embracing reality which is postulated as an epistemological necessity? Vasiṣṭha characterizes it as "Bodha-mātratā" (VIb, 25, 13), "Cin-mātram" (VIb, 38, 8), "Cid-ātma" (VIb, 39, 9), etc., which may be rendered

- <sup>1</sup> न संभवति संबन्धो विषयानो निरन्तरः ।  
 न परस्परसंबन्धाद्विनाऽनुभवेन मिथः ॥  
 ऐक्यं च विद्धि संबन्धं नास्त्यसावसमानयोः ॥  
 सजातीयः सजातीयैकतामनुगच्छति ।  
 अन्योन्यानुभवस्तेन भवत्वेकत्वनिश्चयः ॥  
 द्रष्टृदृश्ये न यद्वैकमभविष्यच्चिदात्मके ।  
 तद्दृष्ट्यास्वादमज्ञः स्वात्मा दृष्टुंशुमिवोपलः ॥  
<sup>2</sup> संबन्धे दृश्यदृष्टीनां मध्ये द्रष्टृर्हि यद्वयः ।  
 द्रष्टृदर्शनदृष्ट्यादिवर्जितं तदिदं परम् ॥



in English by the word "Consciousness," when we take it to mean pure consciousness apart from all differentiations. It is very much similar to the "Tathatā" of Aśva-ghoṣa, "Vijñāna-mātrata" of Vasu-bandhu, and the "Supra-Consciousness" of Bergson. It is the essence, the substance, or the reality behind all objects and subjects. "There is no object in which Consciousness is not immanent as its essence, in the same way as there cannot be an earthenware in which clay is not present. (VIb, 25, 17.) As waves are the manifested forms of water, so are all things of the world manifestations of Consciousness." (VIa, 101, 54.)<sup>1</sup> The Ultimate Reality has also been called by the names of Brahman and Ātman in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as in the *Upaniṣads*. Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan has put what Vasiṣṭha really means thus: "Before any question of knowledge arises, this One Self must be presupposed as the ultimate and final fact within which fall all distinctions of subject and object." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 306.)

Having thus found out the ultimate unity of substance in Pure Consciousness, Vasiṣṭha now turns his attention back towards the multiplicity of experience, and revises his conception of objects. If Consciousness is to be presupposed as the essence, the substance, the reality behind all things of our experience, are they not but modifications or forms of Consciousness? But so are our mental states or thoughts. Yet we find a great deal of difference between things and thoughts. Vasiṣṭha, however, like many other idealistic thinkers of the East

<sup>1</sup> सर्वं जगद्गतं दृश्यं बोधमात्रमिदं तत्तम् ।

स्पन्दमात्रं यथा वायुर्जलमात्रं यथाऽर्णवः ॥

एकं यस्तु जगत्सर्वं चिन्मात्रं वारिवाम्बुधिः ।

तदेव स्पन्दते धीभिः शुद्धवारिव वीचिभिः ॥

and the West, points out that this apparent distinction between thoughts and things is obliterated, when we take into consideration another aspect of our experience, namely, dream, which should not be neglected when we want to know the truth of the experience as a whole. "There is nothing present to perception", says Fawcett, "which could not be duplicated exactly in a merely dreaming experience" (Fawcett: *The World as Imagination*, Chap. III), and "There is nothing present in any domain which you perceive normally, which could not be duplicated in a merely solipsistic dream". (Fawcett: *The World as Imagination*, p. 144.) And yet we know that all the subjects, objects, time, space, etc., of the dream-experience are nothing but thoughts, ideas, or images of the sleeping person. What reason can there be, then, against the supposition and belief, that the objects of the waking experience are of the same stuff as dreams are made of? "There is no call to suppose", Fawcett observes, "that anything, save imagination, forms the 'essence' of the appearances that float before sense". (*Ibid*, p. 144.) For, as Vasiṣṭha thinks, there is hardly any difference between the two, the waking and the dream experiences. "The experience of the waking state is thoroughly similar to that of a dream. There is hardly any difference between the two, except that the one seems to be more stable than the other. (IV, 19, 11.) That we call a dream, which is experienced for a short time and in a different context from that of the waking state. But as long as the experience lasts, it is believed to be a waking state. (IV, 19, 10.) Moreover, the waking state can also be experienced as a dream, if the feeling of its being so is strengthened; so a dream, on the other hand, appears a waking experience, when this feeling is very strong. (IV, 19, 13.) From the

standpoint of the Ultimate Reality, there is no difference whatsoever between the waking and the dream-objects. (VIb, 161, 24.) The waking man may not apprehend his waking state to be like a dream, as long as he is living, but he will realize it to be so, when he experiences another world after death." (VIb, 161, 25.)<sup>1</sup> Schiller similarly writes: "No fundamental difference in character between the two can be established." (Schiller: *Studies in Humanism*, p. 473.) "While it lasts . . . a dream has all the characteristics of reality. So with our present life: it seems real and rational, because we are yet asleep, because the eyes of the soul are not yet opened to pierce the veil of illusion . . . It (dream) is real, while it lasts, so is our world . . . When we awake, both cease to be true . . . And both, moreover, may be seen through by reflection, just as we are sometimes so struck by the monstrous incongruity of our dreams, that, even as we dream, we are conscious that we dream, so philosophy arouses us to a consciousness that the phenomenal is not the real." (Schiller: *Riddle of the Sphinx*, p. 281.)

A similar argument is advanced in the cause of idealism in *Viveka-cūḍa-maṇi*, a poetical work attributed

<sup>1</sup> जाग्रत्स्वप्नदशाभेदो न स्थिरास्थिरते विना ।  
 समः सदैव सर्वत्र समस्तोऽनुभवोऽनयोः ॥  
 जाग्रत्स्वे क्षणदृष्टः स्यात्स्वप्नः कालान्तरे स्थितः ।  
 तज्जाग्रत्स्वप्नतामेति स्वप्नो जाग्रत्स्वमृच्छति ॥  
 स्वप्नोऽपि जाग्रद्बुद्ध्यंशो जाग्रत्स्वमनुगच्छति ।  
 स्वप्नता स्वप्नबुद्ध्या तु यथा संवेदनं स्थितम् ॥  
 इदं जाग्रदयं स्वप्न इति नास्त्येव भिन्नता ।  
 सत्ये वस्तुनि निःशेषसमयोऽनुभूतितः ॥  
 नैतदेवमिति स्वप्नप्रबोधोदात्तप्रत्ययो यथा ।  
 मृत्वाऽमुत्र प्रबुद्धस्य जाग्रति प्रत्ययस्तथा ॥



to Śaṅkarācārya: "In dream, when there is no actual contact with the external world, the mind alone creates the whole universe consisting of the enjoyer (*bhokta*), etc. The waking state is similar to dream; there is no difference. Therefore, all this phenomenal universe is the projection of the mind. Moreover, in dreamless sleep, when the mind is reduced to its causal (*kāraṇa*) state, there exists nothing, as is evident from the experience of all. Hence the world-experience is simply the creation of one's mind and has no objective reality." (*Viveka-cūḍa-maṇi*, 170-171.)<sup>1</sup> Gauḍa-pāda similarly says: "Those objects that are in the subtle condition within, as well as those that are manifest without in the gross condition, are all mere imagination, the difference being only in the means of cognition". (*Maṇḍukya-Karikas*, II, 15.)<sup>2</sup>

So Vasiṣṭha thinks that things in reality are thoughts, ideas or images. "The whole world is merely ideal (*kalpanā-mātram*). (VIb, 210, 11.) It does not exist except in thought. (III, 40, 57.) It arises and exists in the mind. (IV, 4, 11.) All the three worlds are constructed by thought alone. (IV, 11, 23.) The whole universe is the expansion of the mind. (IV, 47, 48.) It is a huge dream arisen within the mind. (IV, 18, 47.) Nothing of the world—sky, mountains, ocean, earth, etc.,—is outside the mind. (V, 48, 49.) The objectivity, its perception and idea, with their essence, duration and movement, are all created and destroyed by the mind. (V, 48, 52.) It is

<sup>1</sup> स्वप्नेऽर्थशून्ये सृजति स्वशक्त्या भोक्त्रादि विश्वं मन एव सर्वम् ।

तथैव जाग्रदपि नो विशेषस्तत्सर्वमेतन्मनसो विजृम्भणम् ॥

सुषुप्तिकाले मनसि प्रलीने नैवास्ति किञ्चित्सकलप्रसिद्धे ।

अतो मनःकल्पित एव पुंसः संसार एतस्य न वस्तुतोऽस्ति ॥

<sup>2</sup> चित्तकाला हि येऽन्तस्तु द्वयकालाश्च ये बहिः ।

कल्पिता एव ते सर्वे विशेषो नान्यद्देतुकः ॥



imagination alone that has assumed the forms of time, space and movement. (III, 56, 37.) The heavens, the earth, the atmosphere, the space, the mountains, the rivers and the directions (of space),—all are portions of the mind, as it were, appearing to be existing outside. (V, 56, 35.) Just as the dream-world is entirely made of one's ideas, so also is the case with the world of waking experience. (III, 101, 35.) As the world of fancy is created by the mind within itself (III, 44, 20), so is this universe imagined by the mind. (III, 44, 21.) All the various things of the world are forms of thought, in the same way as currents, waves, foam and particles are forms of water." (III, 110, 48.)<sup>1</sup>

समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदम् ।  
 विश्वं नास्त्येव मननादृते ।  
 मनसीदं जगत्कृत्स्नं स्फारं स्फुरति चास्ति च ।  
 मनोमनननिर्माणमात्रमेतज्जगत्त्रयम् ।  
 मनोविजृम्भणमिदं सांसार इति संमतम् ।  
 जगद्दीर्घमहास्वप्नः सोऽयमन्तः समुत्थितः ।  
 बहिर्न किञ्चिदप्यस्ति खाद्रव्ययुर्वीदिगादिकम् ।  
 एतत्स्वचित्त एवास्ति पत्रपुञ्जमिवाङ्कुरे ॥  
 रूपालोकमनस्कारतत्ताकालक्रियात्मकम् ।  
 कुम्भकारो घटमिव चेतो हन्ति करोति च ॥  
 देशकालक्रियाद्रव्यसंपत्त्योदेति भावना ।  
 द्यौः क्षमा वायुराकाशं पर्वताः सरितो दिशः ।  
 अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य भागा बहिरिव स्थिताः ॥  
 संकल्पकचित्तं सर्वमेव स्वप्नवदात्मनः ।  
 यदन्तःस्वप्नसंकल्पपुरं च कचनं चित्ते ।  
 तदेतद्वाङ्मनास्त्रैव स्वम्यासात्सत्स्फुटं स्थितम् ॥  
 धाराकणोर्मिफेनश्रीर्यथा संलक्ष्यतेऽम्भसः ।  
 तथा विचित्रविभवा नानातेयं हि चेतसः ॥

Such an idealism is as old in India as the *Upaniṣads*. We read, for example, in the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* (III, 3): "This god, Brahmā, and this god, Indra, . . . these five great elements, . . . creatures born of the egg, from the womb, and from respiration, sprouting plants, horses, cows, men, elephants, whatsoever breathes, whether moving or flying and, in addition, whatsoever is immovable—all this is led by the Intellect and is supported on the intellect. The world is led by the Intellect. Intellect is the support. Intellect is the final reality."<sup>1</sup> According to the Mahā-yāna Buddhism also the whole objective world is ideal (*viññāna-maya*). "There is no such thing as an objective world, which is really an illusive manifestation of the mind, called Ālaya-viññāna." (Suzuki: *Outlines of Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 69.) "The objective world in reality does not exist", according to the Mahā-yāna Buddhism, "but by dint of subjective illusion that is created by ignorance, we project all these 'germs' in the Ālaya-viññāna to the outside world, and imagine that they are there really as they are". (*Ibid*, p. 67.) "Independent of that which perceives (*i.e.*, the ego or subject)", says Aśva-ghoṣa, "there is no surrounding world (or the object)". (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 72.) Bhartṛ-hari has also held a similar view in his *Vākya-padīya*, where he says: "The heavens, the earth, the sun, the oceans, the rivers and the directions—all are portions of the mind existing outside." (III, 7, +1.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> एष ब्रह्मैव इन्द्रः . . . एते सर्वे देवा इमानि च पञ्च महाभूतानि . . . अण्डजानि च जासृजानि च स्वेदजानि चोद्भिज्जानि चाश्वा गावः पुरुषा हस्तिनो यत्किञ्चिद्देदं प्राणि जङ्गमं च पतत्रि च यच्च स्थावरं सर्वं तत्प्रज्ञानेत्रं प्रज्ञाने प्रतिष्ठितं प्रज्ञानेत्रो लोकः प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठा प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ।

<sup>2</sup> योः श्रमा वायुरादित्यः सामराः सरितो दिशः ।

अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य भागा बहिरवस्थिताः ॥

The same kind of Idealism is advocated by Sures'varācārya in his *Manasollāsa* (I, 18): "As in dream, so in the waking state, is the world the construction of the mind", and "Down from Brahmā to the lowest being, all (creatures) are the display of imagination, as in a dream". (I, 28.)<sup>1</sup> The same view is, in much later times, held by Prakāśānanda in his *Vedānta-muktāvalī*: "As the world of dreams, which is really nothing but cognition (*viññāna-mātram*), appears in consciousness under diverse forms of cognition and cognized objects, so too the world of waking consciousness of things animate and inanimate (is nothing apart from the Brahman) (*Muktāvalī* XIX). In the Self alone all the world, whose *esse* is *percipi* (*dṛṣṭi-mātram*) takes its rise, and persists, and perishes over and over again." (*Ibid*, XXII.)<sup>2</sup> Berkeley holds a similar view when he says: "All the choir of heaven and the furniture of the earth, in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world, have not any substance without a mind; that their being is to be perceived or known; that consequently so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind, or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit: it being perfectly unintelligible and involving all the absurdity of abstraction to attribute any single part of them an existence independent of a Spirit." (*Frazer: Selections from Berkeley*, p. 36.) Sir James Jeans adds, after

<sup>1</sup> ब्रह्मादिस्तम्बपर्यन्ता स्वप्नकल्पव कल्पना ।

<sup>2</sup> ज्ञानज्ञेयप्रभेदेन यथा स्वप्ने प्रतीयते ।

विज्ञानमात्रमेवैतत्तथा जाग्रद्व्याचरम् ॥

आत्मन्येव जगत्सर्वं दृष्टिमात्रं सतत्त्वकम् ।

उद्भूय स्थितिमास्थाय विनश्यति मुहुर्मुहुः ॥



quoting this passage in his *The Mysterious Universe*, "Modern Science, seems to me to lead, by a very different road, to not altogether a different conclusion." (Cambridge, 1931, p. 137.)

The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is not satisfied with a mere general statement of his idealism. He takes up Time, Space, Things, Stability, Physicality, Regularity, etc., of the world one by one and shows with the help of illustrations and stories how every one of these conceptions is ideal, depending wholly upon the mind to which alone it is real, and relative in every case to thought. None of these things, according to him has any reality of its own apart from the mind in which it exists and by which it is conceived and imagined. Here we shall put in brief what he has said on each of these conceptions:

*Space*: "The idea of space originates where a monad is manifested. (Vib, 73, 19.) It is relative to the activity of the mind, as it is observed that even a little space, say of the size of a cow's foot-print, can give us the impression of an extent of several miles during the play of imagination, dream and mental flight." (III, 103, 13.)<sup>1</sup> In a small head, it may be added, to explain the meaning of Vasiṣṭha, an infinite world of dreams with its immeasurable extension, can be experienced and is actually experienced by all of us. It may be further pointed out, in support of Vasiṣṭha's contention, that a vista of miles may be represented by an expert artist on a small piece of canvas, so that if a man would make an effort to suppress the usual

<sup>1</sup> चिदणुयत्र भातोऽसौ देशो मितिमुपागतः ।

मनोरथे तथा स्वप्ने संकल्पकलनासु च ।

गोष्पदं योजनव्यूहः स्वामु लीलामु चेतसः ॥



idea of extension and would look at the painting intently, he will perceive the scene actually extending to miles. However minute the pictures on a paper may be, we always feel them to be like their originals, so long as the mutual proportion of their content is alright. This is probably the case in dreams. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, holds: "The extension of space is nothing real in itself" (III, 44, 19)<sup>1</sup> apart from a mind.

*Time*: "The reality of time also consists in imagination. (V, 49, 14.) "As there is no real extension of space, so there is no duration of time" (III, 20, 28), apart from the activity of the mind. "If within a moment one could imagine the whole cycle of the world's existence, the moment would actually be experienced as a full world-cycle (*kalpa*); and *vice versa*, a whole cycle can be experienced as a moment through imagination." (III, 60, 20-21.) That the duration of time is relative to the mind is evident from the fact that "One night of a tormented creature passes as an age, whereas it is experienced as a moment in the merriment of the happy. And, in a moment a dream extending to ages can be experienced, and, *vice versa*, countless years are passed as a moment's dream. (III, 60, 22.) The same period of one day is experienced as long as a year by those who suffer from separation from their beloved. (III, 20, 51.) There is no experience of time in the case of those who can stop the activity of their mind in meditation. (III, 60, 26.) They will feel the passing of ages as the twinkling of an eye. (III, 20, 50.) The ages of the evolution and involution of the cosmos are a moment for some beings, the twinkling of an eye for others, and a *kalpa* (cycle)

<sup>1</sup> न देशकालदीर्घत्वम् ।

for others. (III. 40, 30.) The whole life-time of a Manu is only a moment for Brahmā, and the life of Brahmā is said to be only a day for Viṣṇu, (III, 60, 25); the life-time of Viṣṇu, again, is said to be a day for Śiva." (III, 60, 26.)<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note that the ideality and relativity of time and space, on which the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is very emphatic throughout, are being accepted by modern thinkers in science and philosophy. "Einstein", says Eddington "has now shown that in physics, time and space are purely relative to the observer, and the physical space is now recognized as something definitely dependent upon the limitation of our sense-perceptions of matter. Mathematically many different kinds of space are conceivable." (Eddington: *Space*,

- <sup>1</sup> विप्र संकल्पमात्रोऽसौ कालो ह्यात्मनि तिष्ठति ।  
 देशदैर्घ्यं यथा नास्ति कालदैर्घ्यं तथाऽङ्गुले ॥  
 निमेषे यदि कल्पौघसंविदं परिविन्दति ।  
 निमेष एव तत्कल्पो भवत्यत्र न संशयः ॥  
 कल्पे यदि निमेषत्वं वेत्ति कल्पोऽप्यसौ ततः ।  
 निमेषीभवति क्षिप्रं तादृक्स्वरूपात्मिका हि चित् ॥  
 दुःखितस्य निशा कल्पः सुखितस्यैव च क्षणः ।  
 क्षणः स्वप्ने भवेत्कल्पः कल्पश्च भवति क्षणः ॥  
 कान्ताविरहिणामेकं वासरं वत्सरायते ।  
 ध्यानप्रक्षीणचित्तस्य न दिनानि न रात्रयः ॥  
 निमेषेणैव मे कल्पो गत इत्यनुभूयते ।  
 क्षणकल्पजगत्सङ्घाः समुद्यन्ति गलन्ति च ।  
 निमेषात्कस्यचित्कल्पात्कस्यचिच्च क्रमं शृणु ॥  
 यन्मूर्तः प्रजेशस्य स मनोजीवितं मुनेः ।  
 जीवितं यद्विरिञ्चेत् तदिदं किल चक्रिणः ।  
 विष्णोर्पञ्जीवितं राम तद् वृषाङ्कस्य वासरः ॥

*Time and Gravitation*, p. 43.) Kingsland says: "The apparently extended events of a life time can in dream-consciousness take place in a 'time' which in waking consciousness is represented by a fraction of a second. In the consciousness of a drowning man the same thing is experienced. In mystical consciousness it is even more pronounced." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 342.) "We have every reason", says the great psychologist, James, "to think that creatures may possibly differ enormously in the amount of duration which they intuitively feel." (James: *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 639.) Madame Blavatsky also observes: "Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness, as we travel through the Eternal Duration and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced." (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 69.) Compare also what Bhagavān Dās says on the problem: "As this succession of events, *i.e.*, experiences, identifications and separations, slackens or quickens or ceases (comparatively and apparently), so the standard of time changes; it appears to be long or short, or even disappears altogether, as in the case of sound slumber . . . to the individual and limited consciousness . . . The same is the case with the standard of time with reference to the waking consciousness . . . the quick or slow *passing* of time is something subjective, and the real significance of the length or shortness of time is also subjective; being only the *feel* of such a length or shortness." (Bhagavān Dās: *Science of Peace*, Second Edn., pp. 236-237.)

*Things*: "That which is experienced is a thing. (Vib, 73, 20.) It is consciousness that appears as an object. (III, 44, 18.) The reality of things consists in



their being thought. They are nothing but a product of prolonged imagination. (III, 26, 52.) All things of the world are made of the same stuff as the earth, cities, etc., appearing in a dream are. Their effectiveness to some purpose is also of the same nature as that of the forms (woman) of a dream. (III, 26, 48.) They are as much our own ideas, and nothing beyond them, as the objects seen by a deranged mind, where others see nothing (III, 26, 49); as the ghost-visions of boys; or as the perception of ghosts, forests, trees, etc., in empty space by the panic-stricken, the intoxicated, the half-sleepy, and the sea-sick boat-passengers." (III, 26, 51.)<sup>1</sup> Fawcett also says similarly: "Perceived Nature is a 'stuff' such as dreams and private imagined worlds are made of." (Fawcett: *The World as Imagination*, p. 131.) "Substance" according to Prof. Eddington "is a fancy projected by the mind into the external world". (*The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 318.)

*Regularity (Niyati)*: "There is no meaning in regularity or irregularity in dream-consciousness (Vib, 148, 20); everything that is experienced in a dream is taken

<sup>1</sup> उपलब्धं विदुर्द्रव्यम् ।

चितिश्रेत्यर्थतामेति ।

यथा भावितमेतेषां पदार्थानामतो वपुः ।

अभ्यासजनितं भाति नास्त्येकं परमार्थतः ॥

स्वप्ने नगरमुर्वी वा शून्यं खातं च बुध्यते ।

स्वप्नाङ्गना च कुरुते शून्याऽप्यर्थक्रियां नृणाम् ॥

खं पृथ्व्यादितया बुद्धं पृथ्व्यादि भवति क्षणात् ।

मूर्च्छायां परलोकोऽपि प्रत्यक्षमनुभूयते ॥

तस्तद्वीचार्धनिद्राश्च नौयानाश्च सदैव खे ।

वेतालवनवृक्षादि पश्यन्त्यनुभवन्ति च ॥



to be in regular order." (VIb, 148, 21.)<sup>1</sup> So is the case with the world of waking experience. Vasiṣṭha seems to think, like Hume, that there is no absolute necessity in the course of nature.

**Stability (sthirata):** So also is the case with the stability of our waking experience. The world seems to be a stable world existing in its own reality, apart from the mind which really holds it. But the truth of this belief is shaken, when we think of the world of our dreams, which also appears to be existing in the same manner as long as it lasts, for we all know that the dream-world is unstable. So Vasiṣṭha says, "As a dreamer merged in dreams sees stability in dreams, so also do we imagine stability in the waking experience." (VIa, 61, 29.)<sup>2</sup>

**Physicality (Ādhibhautikata):** "The essential nature of all objects is thought; materiality is a wrong idea. (VIb, 68, 34.) There is no materiality in objects even in name, not to say of reality. (III, 57, 16.) Whatever is perceived by the mind as an object is taken by it to be material." (III, 57, 15.)<sup>3</sup> The physical body is also the result of continued materialization of thought.

<sup>1</sup> नियन्त्रियती ब्रूहि कीदृशे स्वप्नसंविदि ।

यावद्भानं किल स्वप्ने तावत्सैव नियन्त्रणा ॥

<sup>2</sup> स्वप्ने निमग्नवीजन्तुः पश्यति स्थिरतां यथा ।

सर्गस्वप्ने मग्नबुद्धिः पश्यति स्थिरतां तथा ॥

<sup>3</sup> आतिवाहिकमेवैषां भूतानां विद्यते वेषुः ।

अत्राधिभौतिकव्याप्तिरसत्यैव पिशाचिका ॥

वास्तवेन तु रूपेण भूम्याद्यात्माऽऽधिभौतिकः ।

न शब्देन न चार्थेन सत्यात्मा शशशृङ्गवत् ॥

आतिवाहिकदेहेन दृश्यं यदवलोकितम् ।

भूम्यादि नाम तस्यैव कृतं तच्चाधिभौतिकम् ॥

(III, 57, 14.) "We do not find", says Vasiṣṭha, "any cogency in the belief that consciousness originates in the body like the intoxicating power in stale sugar (as the Cārvākas have held); in our opinion, the body itself is a product of thought, just as it happens in dreams." (VIb, 52, 11.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what a great physicist of modern times has written: "All through the physical world runs that unknown content, which must surely be the stuff of our consciousness. Here is a hint of aspects deep within the world of physics, and yet unattainable by the methods of physics. And, moreover, we have found that where science has progressed the furthest, the mind has but regained from nature that which the mind has put into nature." (Eddington: *Time, Space and Gravitation*, p. 201.)

According to Vasiṣṭha, thus, every thing is an idea, image or thought, and as such proceeds from, exists in, and merges in the mind. All objects exist potentially in the mind from which they originate. This is described as follows: "The objective world is potentially inherent in the subject, as seeds of a lotus exist in the filaments of its flower (III, 1, 42); as flavour in a fruit; as oil in sesamum seeds; as fragrance in flowers. (III, 1, 43.) As dream-images and thoughts arise and subside in the mind so the objects arise from and subside in the subject (III, 1, 45), etc., etc."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> आतिवाहिकदेहस्य कालेनाभ्युदितो भ्रमः ।  
आविर्भौतिकदेहोऽहमिति रज्जुमुजङ्गवत् ॥  
मदशक्तिरिव ज्ञानमिति नास्मासु सिध्यति ।  
देहो विज्ञानतोऽस्माकं स्वप्नवत् तु तत्त्वतः ॥

<sup>2</sup> आलीनबल्लरीरूपं यथा पद्माक्षकोदरे ।  
आस्ते कमलिनीबीजं तथा द्रष्टरि दृश्यव्रीः ॥

The relation that exists between the objects and the subject is conceived by Vasiṣṭha as that of *identity* (*ananyatva*) or *non-difference* (*abhinnatva*) of substance. "The mind and the objects are never different." (III, 3, 36.)<sup>1</sup> What is actually meant by identity or non-difference is illustrated by the following similes: "As the surging waves are related to the body of water from which they arise (III, 94, 20); as the rays of light scattered all around are related to the lamp from which they proceed (III, 94, 21); as the sparks of fire flung about by the burning flame are related to the column of fire (III, 94, 22); as the dust and filaments are related to the flower; as the spreading beams of the moon are related to the moon (III, 94, 23); as the branches and flowers of a tree are related to the tree (III, 94, 24); as the gold ornaments are related to gold (III, 94, 25); as the drops of water are related to water (III, 94, 26); as the particular spaces in a jar, dish, hole, etc., are related to the infinite space (III, 94, 27); as the mirage-river is related to the rays of the sun (III, 94, 28), so are all objects related to the subject from which they proceed. They appear to be different from it, but are not so in reality." (III, 94, 29.)<sup>2</sup>

यथा रसः पदार्थेषु यथा तैलं तिलादिषु ।

कुसुमेषु यथाऽऽमोदस्तथा द्रष्टरि दृश्यधीः ॥

यथा चात्र तव स्वप्नः संकल्पश्चित्तराज्यधीः ।

स्वानुभूत्यैव दृष्टान्तस्तथा ह्यस्ति दृश्यभूः ॥

<sup>1</sup> मनोदृश्यदृशौ भिन्ने न कदाचन केनचित् ॥

<sup>2</sup> किञ्चित्प्रचलिता भोगात्पयोराशेरिवोर्मयः ।

स्वतेजः स्पन्दिताभोगाद्दीपादिव मरीचयः ॥

स्वमरीचिवलोद्भूता ज्वलिताग्नेः कणा इव ।

मन्दारमञ्जरीरूपाश्चन्द्रबिम्बादिवांशवः ॥



To the question whether there is a thing-in-itself, as Kant supposed, behind the perceived universe on the ground of which the mind imagines the forms of the objective world of its experience, Vasiṣṭha has a definite reply in the negative. There is no external real substance behind the thoughts, images and ideas which constitute the objective world: "Just as in dreams, the objects, their perceptions and ideas . . . are made of empty void, so is exactly the case with the objects of the waking experience. (VIb, 62, 23-24.) As there is no evidence of the 'reality' of the body, places and instruments experienced in a dream, so is the case with the bodies, places and instruments of our waking experience. (VIb, 62, 27.) As the words—earth, roads, mountain surface, etc., denote only forms of empty space in the dream-experience, so is the case with the terms 'I', 'You', 'She', etc., of the waking experience. (VIb, 62, 29.) As in a dream, struggle, bustle and activity are experienced, although they are nothing in reality, so is the whole business of life here. (VIb, 62, 30.) Consciousness experiences this world, in which nothing really has been produced from any material cause, in the same way as a dreamer creates his own world from empty space." (VIb, 62, 44.) The world-experience is *nothing* in reality but a dream.

यथा विटपिनश्चित्रास्तदृपा विटपन्त्रियः ।

कटकाङ्गदकेयूरयुक्तयः कनकादिव ॥

निर्झरादमलोद्भवातात्पयसामिव बिन्दवः ।

बाकाशस्य घटस्थालीरन्त्राकाशादयो यथा ॥

शीकरावतलहरीबिन्दवः पयसो यथा ।

मृगतृण्णातरङ्गिण्यो यथा भास्करतेजसः ॥

सर्वा दृश्यदृशो द्रष्टव्यतिरिक्ता न रूपतः ।



(III, 42, 8.)<sup>1</sup> This reminds us of a very beautiful hymn of Tulasi-dāsa :

"O silent Sleeper in this seething Sea !  
Plain we behold and yet speech may not be.  
We wander, wonder, search and then we find,  
But find it in the silence of the mind.  
Who will believe the marvel, if we say,  
That on the boundless walls of nothingness,  
A painter full of skill but bodiless,  
Limns phantom figures that will never fade,  
Though to efface them, time has e'er essayed,  
Limns forms of countless colours ceaselessly ?  
O serene Sleeper of this stormy Sea !"

(Tulasi-dāsa : *Vinaya-patrikā*, 112, quoted in *Science of Peace* of Bhagavān Dās, on page 250.)

Taking the world-experience to be nothing more than a display of imagination, a construction of thought

<sup>1</sup> रूपालोकमनस्काराः शब्दपाठवचांसि च ।  
यथा स्वप्ने नमस्येव सन्ति तत्र तथाऽम्बरे ॥  
रूपालोकमनस्कारैः स्वप्ने चित्रम एव ते ।  
यथोदेति तथा तत्र तद् दृश्यं खात्मकं स्थितम् ॥  
शरीरस्थानकरणसत्तायां का तव प्रमा ।  
यथैव तेषां देहादि तथाऽस्माकमिदं स्थितम् ॥  
यथा स्वप्ने धराध्वादिपृष्ठव्यवहृतिर्नभः ।  
तदा ब्रह्म च त्वं सा च तदिदं च तथा नभः ॥  
यथा स्वप्ने नृभिर्युद्धकोडाहलगमागमाः ।  
असन्तोऽप्यनुभूयन्ते संसारनिकरास्तथा ॥  
निरुपादानसंभारमभित्तावेव चित्रमः ।  
पश्यत्यकृतमेवेमं जगत्स्वप्नं कृतं यथा ।  
दीर्घस्वप्नमिदं विश्वं विद्वद्ब्रह्मतादिसंयुतम् ॥

a net-work of ideas through and through, as Vasiṣṭha thinks it to be, there arises a question: Who thinks the world out, whose ideas form the contents of the world, who dreams the world-dream? "Who is the imaginer of these different forms?" as Gauḍa-pāda asks in his famous *Maṇḍukya-kārikas*. (II, 11.) This problem has also been raised in later times in the Advaita Vedānta thus: "Whose ignorance is the material cause of the universe, whether that of the individuals or of a Cosmic God?" (Vide, *Siddhānta-leśa-saṃgraha*, I, 6.) It has also become an oft-discussed problem in the West, since the enunciation of Berkeleyian Idealism. Broadly speaking, there can be three answers to this question: I might hold that as my dream-world, including all the individuals of that world, is within my own consciousness and is the creative work of my own mind, so the waking experience is also my own imagination, outside of which nothing exists. Such a view is called Solipsism or Subjective Idealism. It is the doctrine according to which "The external world has no existence independent of the mind; it is but a thought or idea existing in the mind; all apparent modifications of the external objects being modifications of the mind of the thinking subject. The objective world exists in and for and by the individual subject; it has no independent reality—it is the 'dream' of the subjective self". (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 148.) Or, it might be believed that there is some Divinity which imagines the whole Universe including myself and other individuals who have as much right to be counted upon as I. This view may be called the Absolute Idealism or Divine Imaginism. There might be a reconciliation of these two opposite views—one holding the individual and the other God to be the author of the

world-dream—in a third view, which might balance the claims of the individual as well as of God, by advancing the hypothesis of a 'Super-individual Consciousness' or 'Consciousness in general' operating in and behind all individual minds and all objects of the universe at the same time, as the ultimate Self or essence of all, which is believed to imagine the forms of the universe, which are represented in each individual as his own ideas, presenting a view of the whole universe from a peculiar perspective of the individual. It is difficult for a casual reader to know definitely which of the above views is advocated by Vasiṣṭha, for we find in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* all of these views advocated at different places. To us it appears that he stands definitely and finally for the last view which reconciles the first two in a higher or deeper type of Idealism, in which all rival claims of realism and idealism, of the individual and the cosmos, etc., are to a great extent satisfactorily reconciled.

The following statements in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* seem to favour subjective idealism: "No individual is aware of anything but his own ideas. (III, 55, 61.) One knows only what has come to pass in his own experience. (VIb, 13, 4.) All creatures, inert or moving, are shut up within their own experience. (III, 55, 62.) No one can know the world of another's experience, as a Brāhmaṇa cannot know the taste of wine (for he would never drink.) (VIb, 195, 31.) In every individual separately has arisen the experience of the world in the same way as soldiers, while dreaming, experience their own battle-fields, each within his own mind, and quite distinct from that of another. (IV, 17, 27 & III, 40, 29.) Millions of the world-orbs have arisen in the experience of each individual. (IV, 61, 14.) Vision of



countless worlds is seen by every monad within itself." (III, 27, 29.)<sup>1</sup>

But from the following passages it appears that he believes in an objective world, imagined by a Cosmic God whom he calls *Brahmā*, existing independently of the individual who is also a part of this universe, so far as he is an individual, and thus seems to favour Objective Idealism: "The objective world continues to be the same as it was imagined by the *Prajā-pati* (the Lord of creatures) at the beginning of the creation. (III, 55, 47.) In this ideal (imagined) world, substances continue to be of the same fixed nature, as they were imagined to be at the commencement of the world. (III, 55, 67.) The world is the imagination of the *Prajā-pati*. It becomes as He thinks it to be. (VIb, 186, 65.) The order in which it was imagined has become fixed and unalterable ever since. (III, 21, 46.) The inherent nature of the objects like the earth, snow, fire, etc., continues to be the same as it was imagined by *Brahmā*." (III, 54, 13, 16, 18.)<sup>2</sup> *Vasiṣṭha* seems to

<sup>1</sup> न किञ्चिदपि जानाति निजसंवेदनादृते ।  
यं प्रत्युदेति सर्गोऽयं स एवैनं हि चेतति ॥  
स्वसंज्ञानुभवे लीनास्तथा स्थावरजङ्गमाः ।  
अन्यस्यान्यं न जानाति सीधुस्वादुमिव द्विजः ॥  
प्रत्येकमुदितो राम नूनं संसृतिखण्डकः ।  
रात्रौ सैन्यनरस्वप्नजालवत्स्वात्मनि स्फुटः ॥  
पृथक्प्रत्येकमुदितः प्रतिचितं जगद्भ्रमः ।  
प्रत्येकमुदितस्तेन ब्रह्माण्डानीव कोटिशः ॥  
परमाणौ परमाणौ सर्गवर्गा निरर्गलम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> सर्गादौ स्वप्नपुरुषन्यायेनादिप्रजापतिः ।  
यथा स्फुटं प्रकचितस्तथाऽद्यापि स्थिता स्थितिः ॥  
एवं भ्रान्तिमये विश्वे पदार्थाः संविदंशवः ।  
सर्गादिषु यथैवासंस्तथैवाद्यापि संस्थिताः ॥



be alive to the fact "that so far as the 'I', the individual thinking subject, is concerned, 'things' exist independently, and that when we lose touch with the objective world of our present consciousness, those 'things' still exist: they exist in the consciousness of other individuals, and even should the whole humanity perish and become utterly extinct on this globe, we cannot rid ourselves of the idea that the globe itself would still exist." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 148.)

Both these views are again found to be reconciled by Vasiṣṭha in the form of a higher kind of Idealism which might be called the Absolute Idealism, or Imaginism, if we do not forget that the Absolute Consciousness in which the entire universe is held, is our own higher Self which is at the same time the Self of everything else in this universe. We shall be more and more acquainted with this Idealism as we proceed. Here we shall gather together a few of his statements bearing on the position: "For us there is no difference between Realism (*Bahyārtha-vāda*) and Idealism (*Vijñāna-vāda*) for everything is ultimately of the nature of thought. (VIb, 38, 4.) The world-idea arises in every individual

संकल्पयति यन्नाम प्रथमोऽसौ प्रजापतिः ।  
 तत्तदेवाशु भवति तस्येदं कल्पनं जगत् ॥  
 आदिसर्गे जगद्भ्रान्तिर्यथेयं स्थितिमागता ।  
 तथा तदाप्रभृत्येवं नियतिः प्रौढिमागता ॥  
 तस्मिन्प्रथमतः सर्गे या यथा यत्र संविदः ।  
 कचितास्तास्तथा तत्र स्थिता अद्यापि निश्चलाः ॥  
 सर्गादौ स्वयमेवान्तश्चिदथा कचिताऽऽत्मनि ।  
 हिमाद्व्यादितयाऽद्यापि सा तथाऽऽस्ते स्वसत्तया ॥  
 यद्यथा कचितं यत्र व्योमरूप्यपि पार्थिवम् ।  
 सर्गादौ तस्य चलितुमद्य यावन्न युज्यते ॥

mind in the same manner as it arose in the beginning in the mind of Brahmā. (VI, 51, 2.) The Cosmic imagination is the original stress which is initiated and represented in all minds. (III, 55, 48.) We know each other and share the world-experience in common with others, on account of there being represented or reflected (*prati-bimba*) in each individual the same Cosmic order of ideas which is imagined in the Cosmic Consciousness (*Mahā-cit*). (III, 53, 25.) Although every individual is shut up within his own world of ideas, yet the individuals know each other by mutual representation in each other's consciousness (*sva-saṁketa-parāyaṇa*). (III, 55, 62.) So, in every monad everything is represented in the same fashion as in the Cosmic Mind (*Virāḍ-ātma*).” (VIb, 20, 7.)<sup>1</sup> Schiller suggests a similar view when he writes: “It is quite possible to make several subjects share the same hallucination . . . If we can experimentally create a subjective world of objective reality (*i.e.*, valid for several persons) . . . what may not be achieved by an operator of vastly greater knowledge and power.”

- १ बाह्यार्थवादविज्ञानवादयोरैक्यमेव नः ।  
 वेदनात्मैकरूपत्वात्सर्वदा सदसंस्थितेः ॥  
 ब्रह्मपुर्यष्टकस्यादावर्थसंविद्यथोदिता ।  
 पुर्यष्टकस्य सर्वस्य तथैवोदेति सर्वदा ॥  
 प्रथमोऽसौ प्रतिस्पन्दः पदार्थानां हि बिम्बकम् ।  
 प्रतिबिम्बितमेतस्माद्यत्तदद्यापि संस्थितम् ॥  
 महाचित्प्रतिभासत्त्वान्महानियतिनिश्चयात् ।  
 अन्योन्यमेव पश्यन्ति मिथः संप्रतिबिम्बितात् ॥  
 स्वसंज्ञानुभवे लीनास्तथा स्यात्परजङ्गमाः ।  
 परस्परं यदा सर्वे स्वसंकेतपरायणाः ॥  
 यादृगेव विराडात्मन्येष विस्तार आगतः ।  
 तादृगेवेह सर्वस्मिन्ननुमात्रेऽपि भूतके ॥

(Schiller: *Riddle of the Sphinx*, p. 281.) Stanley Redgrove suggests a hypothesis like that of Vasiṣṭha when he writes: "And it is because the Spirit is what it is, because of our likeness . . . to God, that this real physical world is possible to some extent to us as an ideal construction corresponding to the Divine ideal construction. The 'external world' we know is the world as it exists in each of our minds; the real 'external world' is the world as it exists in the Divine Mind (Compare Brahmā of Vasiṣṭha); in so far then, as our ideal constructions are alike to the Divine do we know Reality." (Stanley Redgrove: *Matter, Spirit and Cosmos*, p. 104.) Compare also the view of Kingsland: "The independent validity, which we assign to the objects on this physical plane, is due to the fact that we are formally convinced, that these external objects exist independently of our *individual* consciousness; the external world goes on, whether we are alive or dead. In this conviction we are right, simply because the external world of *Nature* exists in the Cosmic Mind; it is only reflected in the individual mind; and can only be re-arranged therein, not created. Yet even so, there is still a certain amount of individual *colouring* contributed by the individual mind to the most ordinary objective thing on the plane of perception. No two persons see the same thing exactly alike, but common perception is sufficiently alike to give a collective *reality* to this physical world. The individual derives his consciousness from a larger Consciousness, Cosmic Man, and it is this Cosmic Man, not the individual, who 'creates' that objective world, which is the same, yet not the same, for each individual man." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 346-347.)

In this connection we are reminded by Vasiṣṭha that the mutual representation of the individuals and their



worlds, or the representation of the Cosmic World in every monad in a particular way, is not a universal and all-compelling law, never to be violated and always to be obeyed everywhere. No individual is, according to Vasiṣṭha, bound by this rule. Every monad, being essentially identical with the Infinite and Absolute Reality, is essentially and absolutely free to will and imagine his own world in his own way. Each monad independently imagining his own world, there occur common contents in different world-experiences only *accidentally* (*Kaka-tāla-sthiti-vat*). This point is touched in the following statements: "The working of the mind is very wonderful. Sometimes, quite accidentally, the same idea arises in many minds. (V, 49, 10.) The same dream is seen by many persons. (V, 49, 11.) Many people sometimes see a (second) moon at the same time and at the same place, although it is actually an idea in the mind of each one of them. The same woman is enjoyed by many people in their imagination individually and at the same time. (VIb, 210, 8.) So, I am a person in your dream as much as you are a person of my dream. (VIb, 151, 10.) All the individuals and objects are thus mutually existing as ideas in one another's world-dream. (VIb, 154, 11.) I am a reality for you, as much as you are to me in this huge world-dream." (III, 42, 20.)<sup>1</sup> "*Collective dreams*" writes Conklin, "have in rare instances been reported. Although rare, they are of considerable theoretical value. As the name indicates, they are instances

<sup>1</sup> कदाचित्प्रतिभैकैव बहूनामपि जायते ।

काकोलतालस्थितिवद्विचित्रा हि मनोगतिः ॥

तथा हि बहवः स्वप्नमेकं पश्यन्ति मानवाः ॥

यथेन्दुत्वं स्वसंकल्पात्सर्वध्यातुः पृथक्पृथक् ।

भात्येवमेव वनितालमः काल्पनिकः स्वतः ॥



of two or more people having the same dream at approximately the same time. The cases reported are of considerable groups of people sleeping under approximately identical conditions who report having approximately the same dream. Soldiers hastily quartered in an abandoned building about which there was a local tradition of ghosts awoke in terror, telling much the same dream of the devil jumping on their chests. . . . It is important to recall that people sleeping under similar conditions may have nearly identical dreams", (Edmund S. Conklin: *Principles of Abnormal Psychology*, p. 341).

Before closing this chapter a few words may also be said on a problem which is passingly mentioned in the *Yoga-vāsisūtha*, namely, the problem of *Khyāti* or appearance. The problem originates in accounting for the appearance of illusory objects. What is it that appears, for example, as a snake before our vision, in the case of an illusory perception of it, when in reality there is no snake present where it appears to be? A number of hypotheses have been offered by various schools of Indian thought, viz., the *a-khyāti-vāda* by the philosophers of the Sāṃkhya school, the *asat-khyāti-vāda* by the *Sūnya-vādins*, the *anyathā-khyāti-vāda* by the followers of the Nyāya school, the *ātma-khyāti-vāda* by the *Vijñāna-vādins* (Idealists), the *anirvacanīya-khyāti-vāda* by the followers of Śaṅkara, and the *sat-khyāti-vāda* by Rāmānuja and his followers. It is very important to note that the names of the last two views are not mentioned in the

अस्माकं त्वं स्वप्नरस्तव स्वप्नरा वयम् ॥

एवमेतदिदं सर्वमन्योन्यं स्वप्नवत्स्थितम् ॥

संसारे विपुले स्वप्ने यथा सत्यमहं तव ।

तथा त्वमपि मे सत्यं सर्वं स्वप्नेऽश्विति क्रमः ॥

*Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, whereas all others are mentioned. This shows that the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* is an earlier work than Śaṅkara. The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* adheres to the *Ātma-khyāti-vāda*, as would appear from the following passage: "All these, *ātma-khyāti*, *asat-khyāti*, *a-khyāti*, *anyathā-khyāti*, are the various expressions of the *Ātma-khyāti*, on account of the wonderful self-manifesting power of Consciousness." (VIb, 166, 9.)<sup>1</sup> Nothing more is said by Vāsiṣṭha in this connection. A few words, however, may be added to explain the meaning of every one of these terms. The general meaning of the *a-khyāti-vāda* is that all knowledge as such, whether of the real or unreal objects, is true. In illusory perceptions, however, we confuse between what is actually perceived by the senses and what is only remembered. The *asat-khyāti-vāda* is the view according to which the whole knowledge is false, there being nothing real either in the objective or in the subjective experience. The *anyathā-khyāti-vāda* is the doctrine according to which owing to the imperfect perception of some object the impressions of the past experience of other similar objects are revived as an actual object. *Ātma-khyāti-vāda*, the doctrine of the idealists, is the view that every object, whether it is regarded relatively real or illusory, is an idea of the mind.

<sup>1</sup> आत्मख्यातिरसत्ख्यातिरख्यातिः ख्यातिरन्यथा ।

इत्येताश्चिच्चमत्कृत्या आत्मख्यातेर्विभूतयः ॥

### CHAPTER III

#### THE WORLD (JAGAT)

So far we have studied the Idealism of Vasiṣṭha in its general aspect. Now we shall point out how he applies Idealism to particular problems of life and the universe. The first thing we take notice of is the objective world. We shall therefore begin with it.

The world as such, as we have already seen, does not exist according to Vasiṣṭha. It is only a system of ideas in the mind of every individual and there is an objective world, so far as our ideas happen to be accidentally common with those of others. There is also a world of ideas in the Cosmic Mind (Brahmā), whose contents we, individuals, and our common world are. Just as a dream-world, though nothing in itself, is taken to be an objectively real something, as long as its experience lasts, so is the case with the world of our waking experience. Vasiṣṭha gives various names to the objective aspect of the experience, three of which may be noted here, namely, *dr̥śya*, *avidyā*, and *māyā*. (III, 23,20.) *Dr̥śya* signifies that which is perceived as an object. *Avidyā* signifies that which does not exist apart from the mind (*na vidyate*). *Māyā* also means the same, viz., that (*yā*) which is not (*mā*), apart from being imagined.

Douglas Fawcett who claims to have given a new philosophy in his *World as Imagination and Divine*



*Imagining*, says: "All contents of the world are psychological in character, of one tissue with the familiar mental contents which are labelled thus. The world of my private fancy is made up of the same stuff as the larger world beyond and including it. This larger world depends on Divine consciring which is continued into subordinate consciring areas in part only free. Any content whatsoever is sustained by consciring, and *were it conscired enough, it would become itself a consciring area, a sentient, an individual unit which has awakened to life.*" (*Divine Imagining*, p. 81.) "These sentients, no longer Its mere contents, become relatively independent centres of consciring." (*Ibid.*, p. 92.) This thought Fawcett calls "a suggestion of great importance." (*Ibid.*, p. 84.) This view, however, appears as it were a reproduction of what Vasiṣṭha holds on this problem. (See VIb, 208, 27-30; IV, 19, 3.) Vasiṣṭha thinks like Fawcett that every content of the Objective World which is the Idea of a Cosmic Mind is in itself "a centre of consciring (*kalpanā*)", and an "individual in its own right". It is the nature of the Absolute Experience, that the contents (*avayavāḥ*) of what is imagined in It, begin to live as so many selves of different types, although in essence ultimately the same. (VIb, 208, 27-28.) Behind every one of them is the same universal Consciousness which manifests in the world. (VIb, 208, 29.) Whatever is conscired (*yad yad drśyam*) becomes an individual in its own right (*Jīva*), as, in summer, small insects are generated from the perspiration of other living beings. (IV, 19, 3.)<sup>1</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> स्वयं स्वभाव एवैव चिद्वनस्यास्य सुसुदृढम् ।

यद्यत्संकल्पयत्याशु तत्र तेऽवयवा अपि ॥

चिदात्मकतया भान्ति नानात्मकतयाऽऽत्मना ।

अप्येकसारास्तिष्ठन्ति नानाकारस्वभावगाः ॥



more appropriate example of this fact can be found in dreams, where the contents of the dreamers' imagination are seen as existing and living in their own right so long as the dreams last. (See IV, 19, 2.)

This idea is carried by Vasiṣṭha to its furthest implication to which Fawcett does not go. When all the contents of what we call the objective world are in themselves so many centres of consciring (*kalpana*), there is no reason, Vasiṣṭha would say, why we should not believe that every such centre of imagining activity should not be the subject or imaginer (*kalpayita*) of its own world? The Universe, according to Vasiṣṭha, contains within it as many worlds as its contents, monads or centres of consciring activity. Now, take the case of one of such worlds. All the numberless contents of this world must have their own objective worlds. This process of worlds within worlds must go on *ad infinitum*. "Within this world there are innumerable worlds, quite distinctive in their nature; and within them, again, are others, and so on like the covers of a plantain tree. (IV, 18, 16-17.) Within the experience of every individual there are other individuals, as within the womb of the earth there are countless insects. (IV, 19, 2.) The whole world exists within the consciousness of a monad as in dream, and in the consciousness of every individual in this world there is a world, which again contains other individuals imagining their worlds. (III, 52, 20.) Every atom of space (in this way) contains a

प्रत्येकं किल तत्रास्ति ब्रह्मचिन्मात्रताऽऽत्मनि ।

सर्वात्मिका सा यत्रास्ते यथाऽन्तर्भाति तत्तथा ॥

यो यो नाम यथा प्रीष्मे कलकस्वेदाद्भवेत्कुमिः ।

यद्यद् दृश्यं शुद्धचित्त्वं तज्जीवो भवति स्वतः ॥

world." (III, 44, 34-35.)<sup>1</sup> There is no *apriori* reason, we may add, against this conception of Vasiṣṭha. "There may be", as Bradley says, "a number of material worlds, not realised in space and by consequence not exclusive and repellent to each other." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, Chap. XXII.)

The worlds of other individuals than ourselves are not, however, experienced by us. We can only imagine them to be thus existing on the analogy of our own dream-experience. "The world of one monad exists unknown to another monad. The inhabitants of one world do not know those of others (VIb, 63, 12-13), in the same way as the dream worlds of sleeping persons, with all sorts of business and activity going on therein, are absolutely unknown and unreal to one another (VIb, 59, 19, 34); or as the world of fancy of one mind exists unknown to another." (III, 21, 45.)<sup>2</sup> Compare Schiller who holds: "There might have existed and exist in the world, myriads of beings of a different order from ourselves . . . Or again, there might be phase upon

<sup>1</sup> सर्गे सर्गे पृथग्रूपं सन्ति सगान्तराण्यपि ॥  
 तेष्वप्यन्तःस्थसर्गाद्याः कदलीदलपीठवत् ॥  
 कदलीदलवत्सन्ति कीटा इव धरोदरे ॥  
 त्रिजगच्चिदणान्तरस्ति स्वप्नपुरं यथा ।  
 तस्याप्यन्तर्धिदणवस्तेष्वप्येकैकशो जगत् ॥  
 आकाशे परमाण्वन्तर्द्रव्यादेरणुकेऽपि च ॥  
 जीवाणुर्यत्र तत्रेदं जगद्वेति निजं वपुः ॥

<sup>2</sup> प्रत्येकमन्तरन्यानि तथैवाभ्युदितानि च ।  
 परस्परमदृष्टानि बहूनि विविधानि च ॥  
 अन्योन्यं तानि सर्वाणि न पश्यन्त्येव किंचन ॥  
 स्वप्नरूपाणि सुप्तानां तुल्यकालं नृणामिव ।

phase of existence forming worlds upon worlds unknown to our knowledge." (Schiller: *Riddle of the Sphinx*, p. 299.) Kingsland also conceives the possibility of worlds existing unknown to us, yet interpenetrating our world: "Such another world, as real and palpable to consciousness as our own, could actually interpenetrate our physical world and its inhabitants go about their affairs and move through our space, without our being in the slightest degree aware of their presence; while our world of matter would be equally non-existent for them." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 101.)

Although the world-experiences of other subjects thus exist unknown to us, there is yet a possibility, according to Vasiṣṭha, of every content of any world, existing anywhere and at any time, being represented in the same manner anywhere and at any time, for, ultimately we are all one with the Absolute Consciousness, which is the substance of all the forms and which is omnipresent. "Because the Brahman is present everywhere, at every time and in everything, everything can be experienced everywhere, as it is possible in dreams. (III, 52, 42.) The whole reality is present in its full potency everywhere; so whatever is intensely thought of anywhere can be experienced there." (III, 52, 43.)<sup>1</sup> In

महार्म्भानुमृष्टानि शून्यानि च परस्परम् ॥

परस्परमृष्टानि नानुभूतानि वै मिथः ॥

संकल्पनगरं सत्यं यथासंकल्पितं प्रति ।

सदेहं वा विदेहं वा नेतरं प्रति किञ्चन ॥

<sup>1</sup> ब्रह्म सर्वगतं यस्मात्तथा यत्र यदोदितम् ।

भवत्याशु तथा तत्र स्वप्नशक्त्यैव पश्यति ॥

सर्वत्र सर्वशक्तिवाद्यत्र या शक्तिरुच्येत ।

आस्ते तत्र तथा भाति तीव्रसंवेगहेतुतः ॥



almost the same way Kingsland writes: "In the Absolute *Continuum* we conceive that the potentiality of every event subsists and persists as an interpenetrative, congruent, eternal, ever-present Now." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 376.)

The worlds that arise in the experience of the countless monads need not, however, be quite similar in nature and contents. There may be an infinite variety of details in them. "Innumerable worlds arise in the Absolute, as waves on the surface of an ocean, as mirage-rivers in a desert, and as flowers on a mango tree. (IV, 47, 14-15.) All the worlds are not of the same nature. Some of them, indeed, are quite similar, others are quite different in nature from others." (VIa, 66, 23-24.)<sup>1</sup> The inhabitants of these worlds are also of different types. "Some of them are inhabited by men, others by demons, others by insects and reptiles." (VIb, 59, 32.)<sup>2</sup> The creators of these worlds are also called by different names. "Sometimes the world is created by S'iva, at others by Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Manu, etc." (IV, 47, 8.)<sup>3</sup> The elements that constitute the

<sup>1</sup> अनन्तानि जगन्त्यस्मिन्ब्रह्मतत्त्वमहाम्बरे ।

अम्भोधिबीचजलवनिमज्जन्त्युद्भवन्ति च ॥

यथा तरङ्गा जलधौ मृगतृष्णा मरौ यथा ।

कुसुमानि यथा चूते तथा विश्वत्रियः परे ॥

भूयो भूयो विवर्तन्ते सर्गेष्वप्स्विव वीचयः ।

अत्यन्तसदृशाः केचित्केचिदर्धसम्क्रमाः ॥

केचिदीषत्समाः केचिन्न कदाचित्पुनस्तथा ॥

<sup>2</sup> देवमात्रैकसर्गाणि नरमात्रमयानि च ।

दैत्यबृन्दमयान्येव कुमिनिर्विवराणि च ॥

<sup>3</sup> कदाचित्सृष्टयः शार्व्यः कदाचित्पद्मजोद्भवाः ।

कदाचिद्वैष्णव्यः कदाचिन्मनुनिर्मिताः ॥



various worlds also may differ. "Sometimes earth, sometimes stone, gold, copper, etc., forms the planet." (IV, 47, 12.)<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the infinite variety in the character of the countless worlds, there is one character in which they all agree, namely, that all of them, without exception, collapse some time or other, for the monads, who sustain them by their consciring activity, do not ever continue to be. They come into existence and pass out of it. "Monads originate and pass away like the green plants of the spring season, which are dried up in summer. (III, 95, 10.) They originate from the Absolute Consciousness, continue to exist for some time, and finally merge in the Absolute." (II, 95, 11.)<sup>2</sup>

Apart from this usual origin and decay of the infinite number of world-experiences, Vasiṣṭha seems to believe in a universal mergence of the entire Cosmos in the Absolute Consciousness at the end of a particular cyclic period, called *Kalpa* in Hindu Philosophy. This he calls the *Mahā-pralaya*. "Everything comes to an end at the close of the *kalpa*-period, as a dream comes to an end, when one enters the state of deep sleep. (VIb, 213, 5.) At that time, nothing (particular) remains in existence. The earth, mountains, movements, time, etc. (VIb, 213, 6), the space with all the worlds within it, all creatures (VIb, 213, 7), all gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu

<sup>1</sup> भूभूमृन्मयी काचित्काचिदासीद् दृषन्मयी ।

आसीद्वैममयी काचित्काचित्ताम्रमयी तथा ॥

<sup>2</sup> जीवौघाश्चोद्भविष्यन्ति मधाविवनवाङ्कुराः ।

तत्रैव लयमेप्यन्ति ग्रीष्मे मधुरसा इव ॥

तिष्ठन्त्यजस्रं कालेषु त एवान्ये च भूरिशः ।

जायन्ते च प्रलीयन्ते परस्मिञ्जीवराशयाः ॥

and S'iva—all come to be merged in the Absolute Reality." (VIb, 213, 8.)<sup>1</sup>

"What remains at the close of the cyclic period is the Absolute Consciousness, the Deep Silence, which is neither light nor darkness, the Unmanifest and unspeakable Reality of which we can only say that It exists (III, 1, 11.) It is the ever-real Great Void, which exists in the subtle and unconditioned form. (III, 2, 37.) It is the ever-calm undecaying Brahman, which is our Ultimate Self." (III, 2, 36.)<sup>2</sup>

How does the Cosmos evolve again from within the womb of this Absolute Reality, after it has merged in It? This problem, *viz.*, the origin of the world from the Absolute Cause or Causes, whatever their nature may be supposed to be, has been a problem agitating the minds of philosophers for ages, both in the East and the West. Whatever the Jainas and the followers of Kumārila in India and Kant in the West might have said against the attempt of man to think of the absolute origin of the Cosmos, there is an instinct in man to ask how the

<sup>1</sup> पुत्र शेषमशेषेण दृश्यमाणु विनश्यति ।

यथा तथा स्वप्नपुरं सौषुप्तीं स्थितिर्मयुषः ॥

निर्विशेषेण नश्यन्ति भुवः शैला दिशो दश ।

क्रिया कालः क्रमश्चैव न किञ्चिदपि शिष्यते ॥

नश्यन्ति सर्वभूतानि व्योमापि परिणश्यति ।

स सर्वजगदामासमुपलब्धुरसंभवात् ॥

ब्रह्मविष्ण्वन्द्रक्षाद्या ये हि कारणकारणम् ।

तेषामप्यतिकल्पान्ते नामापीह न विद्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> ततः स्तिमितगम्भीरं न तेजो न तमस्ततम् ।

अनाख्यमनभिव्यक्तं सत्किञ्चिदवशिष्यते ॥

शून्यं नित्योदितं सूक्ष्मं निरुपाधि परं स्थितम् ॥

ब्रह्मास्ते शान्तमजरमनन्तात्मैव केवलम् ॥

world came into existence. But, what evidence can we, who are within the Cosmos, have as to how it originated? Our knowledge, as Vasiṣṭha believes, is limited to our experience. We cannot know anything which is beyond what may be revealed in our actual or possible experience. If at all we infer anything, it must be based on the analogy of our experience, otherwise there will be no guarantee of its being real. So, as Fawcett says, "An inferred region (of Nature) must be conceived as not essentially different from the contents of our sentient life." (Fawcett: *Individual and Reality*, p. 108.) Thus, if we are to philosophize at all about the total reality, we cannot but presuppose that our experience "samples" (Fawcett) the entire reality. It is only from my experience that I can discover a key to unlock the mysteries of the Cosmos. There is probably no other way. This is what the ancient Seers of the *Upaniṣads* thought in India, and Fichte and Schopenhauer in the West. A careful study of the *Sāṃkhya* theory of evolution, which is probably the oldest systematic account of the evolution of the world, will reveal that it also presupposes the same principle of Idealism that the macrocosm is to be studied in the light of what is experienced in the microcosm. Vasiṣṭha, in the same way, seems to think that the Cosmic process can be rightly construed in the light of individual experience. The problem of the evolution of world-experience, according to Vasiṣṭha, is the same as the evolution of a dream-world. It is a psychical problem ultimately. How a newly born baby comes to the full-awareness of the objective world of his experience, how our world of dreams evolves, how the vision of another world arises after the insensibility caused by death and how a Cosmos originates from the Brahman are the same problem in various garbs.



"The Brahman manifests Itself into the world, exactly in the way as the state of deep sleep manifests itself into a dream." (III, 12, 2.)<sup>1</sup> Kingsland says almost the same thing: "We are not altogether without the means of apprehending how an objective world of form can arise out of pure Subjective *idea*; we possess and exercise the same power in our dream-consciousness." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 340.)

The description given in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* of the stages through which the Continuum of Consciousness gets differentiated into a full world-experience is very vague and confusing. It differs in details, in different places in the work. This is probably due to the fact that the author of the work did not believe in a fixed scheme of creation or evolution. He believes in spontaneity and variety, and not in universal laws and determinism. He probably thinks that there is no fixed and definite outline-scheme of evolution for all world-experiences. But there is one thing to which he invariably holds. It is the general principle underlying all change and evolution, which, according to him, is *desire-fulfilment*. It is the desire (*vāsanā*), will (*iccha*), imagination (*samkalpa*), or strong affirmation (*bhavana*) of the experiencing subject, which materializes itself in the forms of objects of enjoyment on the one hand, and the body and the senses with which to enjoy, on the other. It is the same principle (desire-fulfilment) on which Freud explains the occurrence of the phenomena of dreams. Kingsland calls it the secret of Cosmic Evolution: "Objectivity in its origin arises in and for and by the power of the One Absolute Subject, which thereby objectifies Its own content. Of

<sup>1</sup> सुषुप्तं स्वप्नवद्भाति भाति ब्रह्मैव सर्ववत् ॥



the nature of the process we can form no conception, until we have understood the exercise of the like creative power within ourselves as individual subjects . . . It is one of the deepest mysteries of our nature—a secret carefully guarded, yet unconsciously exercised by all. In its Cosmic aspect it has been conceived to be an exercise of a Will, a Desire, or of that power of the Mind we term Imagination." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 178.)

Here we summarize how, in one place, Vasiṣṭha has described the evolution of world-experience:

In the Absolute Reality, which is the Self, Consciring activity begins to manifest itself, by itself, without any external or ulterior compulsion. (VIa, 11, 37; VIa, 114, 15.) A centre of objectifying activity is then fixed in the Self, and it begins to feel its own separate existence from the Absolute, forgetting its identity with It, asserting itself as an ego (*aham-marsana-purvakam*). (III, 12, 4.) It is then impregnated with the Idea of the future names and forms of the world. (III, 12, 5.) It then assumes a definite form and becomes capable of being named. (III, 12, 6.) Through the intensity of objective thought, it becomes individualized, forgetting its identity with the Absolute and is called Jiva. (III, 12, 7.) Its nature consists in being some thing (*bhāvana-mātra-sāra*) and it changes quickly from one form to another. (III, 12, 8.) Immediately after the rise of this consciring ego in the Pure Consciousness, there is experienced by it the objective Void which is the source of all differentiated objective names and forms. (III, 12, 9.) The ego then intensely thinks of one aspect of this objective continuum, namely, sound and, as a consequence of the intensity of its idea, sound gets differentiated as a definite subtle thing. (III, 12, 13.) Another idea arises in the

ego and differentiates the touch aspect of the objective-continuum into a distinct subtle thing. (III, 12, 18.) In this way other aspects of the continuum, namely, colour, taste, and smell get differentiated through the conscurring activity of the ego by its desire. (III, 12, 20, 22, 24.) The subtle aspects thus differentiated by the ego further evolve into various forms. (III, 12, 26.) They are not now seen existing in their unmixed forms. They now exist mixed with one another, as water mixes with water. (III, 12, 27.) All the forms of the world, existing in the womb of space, like banian trees in a banian seed, are in their essence consciousness. (III, 12, 28.)<sup>1</sup> (N. B. The above passages are freely rendered

<sup>1</sup> शक्तिर्निर्हेतुकैवान्तः स्फुरति स्फटिकांशुवत् ।

जगच्छक्त्यात्मनाऽऽत्मैव ब्रह्म स्वात्मनि संस्थितम् ॥

स्वयमेवात्मनैवात्मा शक्तिं संकल्पनामिकाम् ।

यदा करोति स्फुरता स्पन्दशक्तिमिवानिलः ॥

तदात्मनि स्वयं किञ्चिच्चैत्यतामिव गच्छति ।

अगृहीतात्मकं संविदहंमर्शनपूर्वकम् ॥

भाविनामार्थकलनैः किञ्चिदूहितरूपकम् ।

आकाशादणु शुद्धं च सर्वस्मिन्भाति बोधनम् ॥

ततः सा परमा सत्ता सचेतश्चेतनोन्मुखी ।

चिन्नामयोग्या भवति किञ्चिद्भ्रम्यतया तथा ॥

धनसंवेदना पृथ्वाद्वाविजीवादिनामिका ।

संभवत्यात्तकलना यदोज्झति परं पदम् ॥

सत्तैव भावनामात्रसारा संसरणोन्मुखी ।

तदा वस्तुस्वभावेन त्वनुत्तिष्ठति तामिमाम् ॥

समनन्तरमेवास्याः खसत्तोदेति शून्यता ।

शब्दादिगुणबीजं सा भविष्यदभिधायिका ॥

into English, as literal translation would appear to be unintelligible.)

This scheme of evolution, it will appear, is very much similar to that of the *Sāṃkhya*, which seems to have been interpreted by Vasiṣṭha in the light of his own monism and idealism, on the analogy of dream-experience. It must also be noted that it is different from the scheme of the *Sāṃkara*-school based upon the authority of the *Brahma-sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads*. The main difference between the two is that, according to the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, ego is the source and cause of the objective names and forms in their subtle as well as gross aspects, while, according to the other, the ego is the product of the *sāttvika* or the finest aspects of the

चिदहं तावती व्योमशब्दतन्मात्रमावनात् ।  
 खतो घनीभूय शनैः खतन्मात्रं भवत्यलम् ॥  
 असंप्राप्ताभिधाचारा चिज्जवात्प्रस्फुरद्वपुः ।  
 सा चैव स्पर्शतन्मात्रं भावनाद्भवति क्षणात् ॥  
 तत्रैव चिद्विलासेन प्रकाशोऽनुभवोद्भवेत् ।  
 तेजस्तन्मात्रकं तत्तु भविष्यदभिधार्थकम् ॥  
 भावयंस्तनुतामेव रसस्कन्ध इवाम्भसः ।  
 स्वदनं तस्य संघस्य रसतन्मात्रमुच्यते ॥  
 भविष्यद्द्रूपसंकल्पनामाऽसौ कल्पनात्मकः ।  
 संकल्पात्मगुणैर्गन्धतन्मात्रत्वं प्रपश्यति ॥  
 चित्ता विभाव्यमानानि तन्मात्राणि परस्परम् ।  
 स्वयं परिणतान्यन्तरम्बुनीव निरन्तरम् ॥  
 तथैतानि विमिश्राणि विविक्तानि पुनर्यथा ।  
 न शुद्धान्युपलभ्यन्ते सर्वनाशान्तमेव हि ॥  
 संवित्तिमात्ररूपाणि स्थितानि गगनोदरे ।  
 भवन्ति वटजालानि यथा बीजकणान्तरे ॥



subtle and unmixed elements which evolve previous to the evolution of the ego (*ahamkāra*). The former is idealistic while the latter is a realistic conception.

Thus the whole idea of evolution is idealistic according to the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. It is thoughts that get materialized into physical objects. We must also remember that thoughts themselves are forms or modifications of a still subtler Substance—Consciousness—in which, by its own Creative-Will, conscurring-(*samkalpa*)-centres, from which thoughts emanate, are formed as winds are generated in air, or, to take a modern example, as electric stresses originate in the ether of space. We thus notice three grades of manifestation, which we might call the spiritual, mental and physical, although not quite appropriately. Corresponding to the three grades of manifestation, Vasiṣṭha suggests the existence of three planes (objective continua) of manifestation (or being), namely, those of Consciousness, Mind and Matter, which may be called the Consciousness-continuum, Thought-continuum, and Ether-continuum. Vasiṣṭha uses the word *ākāśa* for plane or continuum. Thus we find him saying: "There are three *ākāśas*, the ordinary ether (*ākāśa*) known to us in the objective world, the mental ether (*citta-ākāśa*), and the ether of consciousness (*cid-ākāśa*). The last is the subtlest of the three." (III, 17, 10.)<sup>1</sup> It may be remembered that Theosophists believe in seven planes in the Universe, *viz.*, Physical, Astral, Mental, Intuitional, Spiritual, Monadic and Divine. (*Vide* Jina-rāja-dāsa: *First Principles of Theosophy*, p. 86.) Vasiṣṭha may, however, say with regard to this division, that it all depends upon the point of view from which one

<sup>1</sup> चित्ताकाशं चिदाकाशमाकाशं च तृतीयकम् ।

द्राभ्यां शून्यतरं विद्धि चिदाकाशं वरान्ते ॥

looks upon the universe, how many planes or grades of intensity or materialization he will find. For, everything is ultimately a movement in the Absolute Consciousness and, as such, it is nothing but Consciousness, in the same way as all physical objects are nothing but ether according to some scientists of the present day. For Vasiṣṭha there is ultimately only one plane of existence, namely, that of Pure Consciousness. "If the thought of there being three *ākāśas* is given up, all of them will be realized as one *ākāśa* of Consciousness (the *Cid-ākāśa*)." (III, 40, 19.)<sup>1</sup>

Another very important problem with regard to the objective world is whether there is any fixed and unalterable nature of things in the world. Modern science presupposes the course of nature to be uniform and the nature and behaviour of things to be more or less fixed and so amenable to study. In some places in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* we find a view like this. It appears that Vasiṣṭha believes that the properties of things in the world are fixed and unalterable to a great extent. The laws of Nature are inexorable. Even gods cannot alter them. This aspect of Nature is called *Niyati* by him. "The properties of things are fixed (*niyata*) and cannot be changed. The way in which things will behave is determined. (III, 62, 9.) Even the gods, Rudra and others, cannot alter them. (III, 62, 26.) The *niyati* (fixed nature) cannot be changed by any one, even though he may be omniscient and learned like Viṣṇu and Hara. (V, 89, 26.) It continues to be the same as it was imagined at the commencement of the present cycle of the world-process. (III, 54, 22.) It controls all creatures of the world, down from the great

<sup>1</sup> विद्येतत्त्रयमेकं त्वमविनाभावनावशात् ।

Rudra to a straw." (VIb, 37, 21.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what Kingsland says: "Individual man can modify the course of Nature on the Earth in many minor ways, but he cannot alter the course of Nature as a whole: that is to say those *Cosmic* happenings which are determined by a higher power, or by higher powers." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 354.)

We must also remember in this connection that Vasiṣṭha is not a naturalist or determinist of the extreme type, as might appear from the above paragraph. He believes in the absolute freedom of the Self which is behind Nature. The world, according to him, could have been otherwise, the nature of things could have been imagined differently and the laws of Nature might have been different from what they are in the present world, if so willed by the Cosmic Mind at the commencement of the Cosmos. The determination of the laws of the world and of the nature of things is contingent ultimately. It is not even teleological, *i.e.*, for bringing about of some ulterior end. It is merely *accidental* (*kaka-tala-vat*) as in a dream. "What does *Niyati* (fixity) or *aniyati* mean in dream-experience? Whatever appears in any way in a dream is proper.

- <sup>1</sup> आदिसर्गे हि नियतिर्भाववैचित्र्यमक्षयम् ।  
 अनेनेत्यं सदा भाव्यमिति संपद्यते परम् ॥  
 न शक्यते लङ्घयितुमपि रुद्रादिबुद्धिभिः ।  
 सर्वज्ञोऽपि बहुज्ञोऽपि माधवोऽपि हरोऽपि च ॥  
 अन्यथा नियतिं कर्तुं न शक्तः कश्चिदेव हि ।  
 सर्गादौ या यथा रूढा संवित्कचनसंततिः ॥  
 साऽद्याप्यचलिताऽन्येन स्थिता नियतिरुच्यते ।  
 आमहारूपपर्यन्तमिदमित्यमिति स्थितेः ।  
 आतृणापद्मजस्पन्दं नियमान्नियतिः स्मृता ॥



(VIb, 148, 20-21.) In the same way, what ultimate meaning can *Niyati* have in this world?" (III, 60, 7.)<sup>1</sup>

One thing that every individual should bear in mind is that the laws of nature are never opposed to man's freedom and effort. They are rather favourable, for in a world of regular laws, where things are fixed in their nature, one can be sure of his progress and attainments, which would not be possible in a world where anarchy prevails. Vasiṣṭha says: "The conception of *Niyati* should not cause one to abandon effort. Effort itself is a manifestation of the *Niyati* controlling the world." (III, 62, 27.)<sup>2</sup>

Nay, Vasiṣṭha goes further and tells us that all of us are ultimately identical with the same omnipotent and absolutely free Spirit and therefore, if we so will and put in sufficient effort, we can change the nature of the world we are experiencing in any way we like. For, it is ultimately we, who either create the cosmos or accept it as it is. "The nature of things is ultimately what the mind has willed it to be, whether fixed or otherwise. (V, 24, 31.) It can therefore change it. It is the ultimate author of the *Niyati*. (V, 24, 32.) That alone is experienced in the world, which the monad which is the Self (individualized) imagines intensely." (V, 24, 35-36.)<sup>3</sup>

Everything whatsoever in the objective world is thus, according to Vasiṣṭha, as it has been imagined by

<sup>1</sup> नियन्त्रियती ब्रूहि कीदृशे स्वप्नसंविदि ।

यावद्भानं किल स्वप्ने तावत्सैव नियन्त्रणा ॥

एवमस्या मुधाभ्रान्तेः का सत्ता कैव वासना ।

काऽवस्था का च नियतिः काऽवश्यमावितोच्यताम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> पौरुषं न परित्याज्यमेतानाश्रित्य धीमता ।

पौरुषेणैव रूपेण नियतिर्हि नियामिका ॥

<sup>3</sup> नियतिं यादृशीमेतत्संकल्पयति सा तथा ।

नियतानियतान्कांश्चिदर्थाननियतानपि ॥

the Cosmic mind, which is a centre of consciring activity, automatically fixed in the Absolute Consciousness. The Cosmic consciring activity is carried on and multiplied in the contents of this original consciring, those contents again becoming centres of such activity. This process goes on *ad infinitum*. As ideas manifest themselves objectively in things, so the movement or activity of consciring (*samkalpa*) manifests itself objectively as energy (*prāṇa*) in the macrocosm as well as the microcosm. What is *vāsanā* or *samkalpa* (desire or will) subjectively, is *prāṇa* objectively. The appearance of things in the objective world is relative to the peculiar construction of the sense-organs of the body, for, with a different set of senses our objective world would have appeared quite differently, as has been contended by all the idealists of the world. All this appears to be presupposed in the following reflections of Vasiṣṭha on "the seed of the world":

"The body is the seed of the tree of the world. (V, 91, 8.) The seed of the body is the mind, which is subject to the control of desires and hopes. (V, 91, 10.) Of the tree of this painful mind (the word 'mind' is here taken in a restricted sense—*citta*), there are two seeds, namely, the movements of *prāṇa* and intense desires. (V, 91, 14.) Both of them are but two aspects of the same thing. The *prāṇa* moves on account of desires and desires arise when *prāṇa* moves. (V, 91, 53.) The seed of the fluctuations of the *prāṇa* and the surging of desires, is the tendency towards objectivity (*samvedyam*). (V, 91, 63-64.)

करोति चित्तं तेनैतच्चित्तं नियतियोजकम् ।

नियत्यां नियतिं कुर्वन्कदाचित्स्वार्थनामिकाम् ॥

जीवो हि पुरुषो जातः पौरुषेण स यदाथा ।

संकल्पयति लोकेऽस्मिन्स्तत्तथा तस्य नान्यथा ॥

This tendency towards objectification has its seed in consciousness, when it assumes a definite form through intense imagination. (V, 91, 89.) Consciousness has its root in 'being' (*satta*). (V, 91, 98.) *Satta-sāmānya* is that state of existence which is above all particularization, without a taint of thisness or thatness and uniformly existing in all things. It is the Ultimate Reality. (V, 91, 101-102.) This *Satta-sāmānya* (uniform existence, literally), destitute of all divisions within Itself, the Pure Homogeneous existence, which is neither this nor that, neither being nor non-being, neither known nor unknown, neither self nor not-self, is the ultimate seed (or source) of everything and It has no other source of Its own." (V, 91, 109, 110, 120.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> संसृतिव्रततेवीजं शरीरं विद्धि राघव ।  
 बीजमस्य शरीरस्य चित्तमाशवशानुगम् ॥  
 द्वे बीजे चित्तश्चक्षुस्य वृत्तिव्रततिधारिणः ।  
 एकं प्राणपरिस्पन्दो द्वितीयं दृढभावना ॥  
 वासनावशतः प्राणस्पन्दस्तेन च वासना ।  
 वासनाप्राणपवनस्पन्दयोरनयोर्द्वयोः ॥  
 संवेद्यं बीजमित्युक्तं स्फुरतस्तौ यतस्ततः ।  
 यदा संकल्प्य संकल्प्य संवित्संविन्दते वपुः ॥  
 तदाऽस्य जन्मजालस्य सैव गच्छति बीजताम् ।  
 अथास्याः संविदो राम सन्मात्रं बीजमुच्यते ॥  
 विशेषं संपरित्यज्य सन्मात्रं यदलेपकम् ।  
 एकरूपं महारूपं सत्तायास्तत्तपदं विदुः ॥  
 सत्तासामान्यमात्रस्य या कोटिः कोविदेश्वर ।  
 सैवास्य बीजतां याता तत एव प्रवर्तते ॥  
 सत्तासामान्यपर्यन्ते यत्तत्कलमयोज्झितम् ।  
 परमाद्यमनाद्यन्तं तस्य बीजं न विद्यते ॥  
 तन्न किञ्चिच्च किञ्चिच्च तत्तदस्तीव नास्ति च ।  
 तत्तद् दृश्यमदृश्यं च तत्तदस्मि न चास्मि च ॥



## CHAPTER IV

### THE MIND (MANAS)

THE most significant concept of Vasiṣṭha's philosophy is that of *manas* (the mind). He calls it the nave of the world. (V, 49, 40.)<sup>1</sup> We might call it the nave of his own philosophy as well. It is the pivot of his whole thought, as we shall see throughout. If one expression were required to denominate his entire philosophy, we might call it the philosophy of the mind. For, everything, every concept, every state of existence is a play and manifestation of the mind according to him. The rising and setting of the mind is the evolution or involution of the world. The purity or impurity of it is our freedom or bondage. On the condition of the mind depend all our worldly and spiritual achievements. We shall learn all these things as we proceed. We shall, in this chapter, note what the term mind means in Vasiṣṭha's philosophy.

This is what we find in several places in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* with regard to the nature of the mind: "The Mind is a definite form of the all-powerful Absolute Consciousness assumed by It through Its own Will-power. (III, 96, 3.) It is, as it were, the thinking aspect of the Absolute Consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> चित्तं नाभिः किलास्येह मायाचक्रस्य सर्वतः ।

(V, 13, 56.) Its essence is imagination. (III, 4, 43.) The Absolute Self manifesting Itself in imaginative (or "consciring"—in the language of Fawcett) activity is the mind. (V, 13, 80.) It is a vibration in the pure Consciousness, rendering it impure with objectivity and change. (III, 96, 41.) It is a pulsating and changing form of Consciousness, which partakes both of subjectivity and objectivity. (III, 96, 40.) The Mind is the tendency of pure Consciousness towards objectivity. (III, 91, 37.) The Mind is the intense tendency of thought to be something. (III, 96, 1.) The Mind is Consciousness imagining itself to be some thing, and although, in reality, as Consciousness it is the infinite whole, yet, as the mind it assumes a particular active existence." (III, 91, 40.)<sup>1</sup> All this means that the Mind is a centre of "consciring" (*Vide Fawcett: Divine Imagining*, p. 55) or imagining (*samkalpa*) in the Absolute Consciousness, at which an objective world is imagined. It is something like a definite wave

<sup>1</sup> अनन्तस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य सर्वशक्तेर्महात्मनः ।  
 संकल्पशक्तिचित्तं यद्रूपं तन्मनो विदुः ॥  
 संपन्ना कलनानाम्नी संकल्पानुविधायिनी ॥  
 संकल्पनं मनो विद्धि संकल्पात्तन्न भिद्यते ॥  
 परस्य पुंसः संकल्पमयत्वं चित्तमुच्यते ॥  
 चिन्निःस्पन्दो हि मलिनः कलङ्कविकलान्तरम् ।  
 मन इत्युच्यते राम न जडं न च चिन्मयम् ॥  
 जडाजडदृशोर्मध्ये दोलारूपं स्वकल्पनम् ।  
 यच्चितो म्लानरूपिण्यास्तदेतन्मन उच्यते ॥  
 चितो यच्चेयकलनं तन्मनस्त्वमुदाहृतम् ॥  
 मनो हि भावनामात्रं भावना स्पन्दवर्मिणी ॥  
 स्वमेवान्यतया दृष्ट्वा चित्तिर्ह्यतया वपुः ।  
 निर्भागाऽप्येकभागाभं भ्रमतीव भ्रमातुरा ॥

of creative activity on the infinite ocean of Consciousness. In Mahā-yāna Buddhism also "The *manas* really marks the beginning of concrete, particular conscious waves in the eternal ocean of the mind ('Consciousness' of Vasīṣṭha)." (Suzuki: *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 133.) Compare also what Kingsland thinks of the mind: "The mind is, as it were, a definite centre in which the Self—which in itself is universal and absolute—can centre itself so as to particularize a 'world'." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 149.)

How then are we to distinguish the mind from the Brahman, the Absolute Consciousness? "The Mind is somehow to be distinguished from the Self, as ornaments made of gold are distinguished from gold. (IV, 42, 18.) The Brahman in a definite form is the mind. (V, 13, 54.) The Brahman is consciousness without any object present to it, whereas the mind is consciousness with objectivity. (V, 13, 53.) As there is no ultimate difference between air and wind, between the void and space, so there is no difference ultimately between the mind and pure Consciousness which itself appears as the mind." (VIa, 96, 19.)<sup>1</sup> Aśva-ghoṣa's conception of the mind and the essence of the mind is very much similar to Vasīṣṭha's conception of the mind and Consciousness. He says in his *Mahā-yāna-Sraddhotpada-Sāstra*. "While

<sup>1</sup> यथा कटककेयूरभेदो हेम्नो विभक्षणः ।

तथाऽऽत्मनश्चित्तो रूपं भावयन्त्याः स्वमाशिकम् ॥

किञ्चिदामृष्टरूपं यद्ब्रह्म तच्च स्थिरं मनः ।

चेत्त्वेन रहिता येषां चित्तद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

चेत्त्वेन सहिता येषां चित्तसेयं कलनोच्यते ॥

वातस्य वातस्पर्शस्य यथा भेदो न विद्यते ।

शून्यत्वखल्वोपमयोऽभिन्नात्राहंत्वयोस्तथा ॥



the essence of mind is eternally clean and pure, the influence of ignorance makes possible the existence of a defiled mind. But in spite of the defiled mind, the mind itself is eternal, clear, pure, and not subject to transformation. Further, as its original nature is free from particularization, it knows itself no change whatsoever, though it produces everywhere the various modes of existence." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 79.) The Mind, according to Vasiṣṭha, is the Pure Absolute Consciousness manifesting Itself as a creative agent. It is not anything separate from the Whole; but is the Whole looked from a particular point of view. It is very often called by Vasiṣṭha a *Cid-anu*, an atom of consciousness, or a monad. The description is very much in conformity with the modern scientific conception of atom. "The real atom", as Kingsland points out, "instead of being the smallest of the small, is the largest of the large, for every so-called atom is nothing less in substance than the *One Substance*—which is the only thing in the Universe which cannot be divided or cut." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 81.) Scientists like Sir Oliver Lodge have begun to think of the infinite potency of an atom. He thinks that in every cubic millimetre of etheric space there is so much energy as to furnish "a million horse-power working continually for forty million years." (Lodge: *The Ether of Space*, p. 95.)

The multiplicity of the external and the internal world, as we have already observed, is nothing but the forms or modes of the mind according to Vasiṣṭha. It is one and the same mind which assumes within an individual various names and forms, in accordance with the role it plays. The various faculties of the internal world are nothing but one and the same mind functioning in different ways and so called by different

names. Mind, Intellect, Citta, Ego, Activity, Imagination, Memory, Desire, Ignorance, Impurity, *Māyā*, *Pra-kṛti*, *Jīva*, Creator, Preserver, etc., the subtle body, the sense-organs, the physical body and the objects of knowledge—all are merely the names and forms of the mind in accordance with the different functions it performs.<sup>1</sup> "As an actor assumes several forms on the stage, so the mind, while engaged in various activities, assumes different names and forms. (III, 96, 43.) As

यथा गच्छति शैलूषो रूपाण्यलं तथैव हि ।  
 मनो नामान्यनेकानि धत्ते कर्मान्तरं व्रजत् ॥  
 चित्राधिकारवशतो विचित्रा विकृताभिधाः ।  
 यथा याति नरः कर्मवशाद्याति तथा मनः ॥  
 गतेव सकलकृत्वं कदाचित्कल्पनात्मकम् ।  
 उन्मेषरूपिणी नाना तदैव हि मनःस्थिता ॥  
 भावानामनुसंधानं यदा निश्चिन्नं संस्थिता ।  
 तदैषा प्रोच्यते बुद्धिरियत्ताग्रहणक्षमा ॥  
 अस्मीति प्रत्ययादन्तरहंकारश्च कथ्यते ।  
 यदा मिथ्याभिमानेन सत्तां कल्पयति स्वयम् ॥  
 अहंकाराभिमानेन प्रोच्यते भववन्धनी ।  
 इदमित्यमिति स्पष्टबोधाद् बुद्धिरिहोच्यते ॥  
 इदं त्यक्त्वेदमायाति बालवत्पेलवा यदा ।  
 विचारं संपरित्यज्य तदा सा चित्तमुच्यते ॥  
 यदा स्पन्दैकवर्मत्वात्कर्तुं शून्यशंसिनी ।  
 आधावति स्पन्दफलं तदा कर्मेत्युदाहृता ॥  
 काकतालीययोगेन त्यक्तवैकघननिश्चयम् ।  
 यदेहितं कल्पयति भावं तेनेह कल्पना ॥  
 पूर्वदृष्टमदृष्टं वा प्राग्दृष्टमिति निश्चयैः ।  
 यदैवेह विधत्तेऽन्तस्तदा स्मृतिरुदाहृता ॥  
 यदा पदार्थशक्तीनां संमुक्तानामिवाम्बरे ।  
 वसत्यस्तमितान्येहा वासनेति तदोच्यते ॥

the same man may appear in various names and forms on account of his being in various offices, so also is the case with the mind, on account of its various activities. (III, 96, 44.) It is called *Manas* when it is functioning as the conscurring activity of the Absolute Consciousness, imagining the multiplicity of forms. (III, 96, 17.) It is called *Buddhi* when it remains fixed on a particular idea (III, 96, 18) and has a definite knowledge of it in the form of "it is this". (VIb, 188, 6.) It is called *Aham-kāra* (ego) when it assumes for itself a distinct existence and binds itself to particular states. (III, 96, 19.) The name is given on account of the idea of "I am" being present in it. (VIb, 188, 5.)

बोधादविद्यमानत्वादविद्येत्युच्यते बुधेः ।  
 स्फुरत्यात्मविनाशाय विस्मारयति तत्पदम् ।  
 मिथ्याविकल्पजालेन तन्मलं परिकल्प्यते ॥  
 सदसत्तां नयत्याशु सत्तां वा सत्त्वमञ्जसा ।  
 सत्तासत्ताविकल्पोऽयं तेन मायेति कथ्यते ॥  
 सर्वस्य दृश्यजालस्य परमात्मन्यलक्षिते ।  
 प्रकृतत्वेन भावानां लोके प्रकृतिरुच्यते ॥  
 जीवनाच्चेतनाजीवो जीव इत्येव कथ्यते ॥  
 प्रौढसंकल्पजालारसं पुण्यं कथमिति स्मृतम् ॥  
 आतिवाहिकदेहोक्त्या समुदाह्रियते बुधेः ॥  
 श्रुत्वा स्मृष्ट्वा च दृष्ट्वा च भुक्त्वा प्राप्त्वा विमृश्य च ।  
 इन्द्रमानन्दयत्पेषा तेनेन्द्रियमिति स्मृतम् ॥  
 देहभावनया देहो घटभावनया घटः ॥  
 कैश्चिद्ब्रह्मेति कथितः स्मृतः कैश्चिद्विराडिति ॥  
 कैश्चित्सनातनाभिर्यः कैश्चिन्नारायणाभिः ।  
 कैश्चिदीश इति ख्यातः कैश्चिदुक्तः प्रजापतिः ॥  
 चित्तेऽश्वेत्यानुपातिन्या गतायाः सकलकृताम् ।  
 प्रस्फुरद्गुणविष्ण्या एताः पर्यायवृत्तयः ॥



It is called *Citta*, when it displays fickleness and passes quickly from one object to another without any proper reason. (III, 96, 20.) When it feels some want in itself and runs after an object, which can be attained as a result of a movement towards it, it is called *Action*. (III, 96, 21.) It is called *Imagination*, when, forsaking its balanced state, it begins to think of some desired state of existence. (III, 96, 22.) It is called *Smṛti* (memory), when it thinks of an idea as previously experienced. (III, 96, 23.) It is called *Desire* (*Vāsanā*), when it is so fixed on the objects of enjoyment as to forget (neglect) everything else. (III, 96, 24.) It is called *Avidyā* (ignorance), because it ceases to be (something different from the Absolute consciousness), when true knowledge is attained (VIb, 188, 8); It is called *Mala* (impurity), because its appearance is for its own harm, and because on account of the net-work of its imagination it conceals the real Self (causes it to be forgotten). (III, 96, 26.) It is called *Māyā*, because on account of it the real (Self) appears as unreal (as if non-existing) and the unreal (the objective world) as real. (III, 96, 29.) It is called *Prakṛti* (the root cause of objective forms) on account of its being the source of all objects of experience. (III, 96, 28.) It is called *Jīva* (Living Principle), because it lives and is conscious. (VIb, 188, 4.) It is called the *Pury-aṣṭaka* (the eightfold city, i.e., the subtle body consisting of eight factors, namely, the mind, the intellect, the ego and the five senses) on account of its strong net-work of imagination. (VIb, 188, 7.) It is also called the *Ātivāhika-sarīra* (the body of thought, so called on account of its capacity to go to distant places without difficulty). (VIb, 188, 9.) It becomes an *Indriya* (sense-organ) and is called so, because it pleases the Self (Indra) through hearing, touch,

vision, taste and smell. (III, 96, 27.) It becomes the *body* by thinking of the body and the *objects* by thinking of the objects. (VIa, 50, 17.) As a creator of its own world, it is called *Brahmā* by some, *Virāṭ* by others, *Sanātana* by some, *Nārāyaṇa* by others, *Īśa* by some, and *Praja-pati* by others. (VIb, 188, 17-18.) All these names are synonyms of the stress in the Absolute Consciousness impregnated with objectivity." (III, 96, 31.)

Very much similar was the view on the unity of the mind amidst its functional multiplicity, prevalent in the *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*. "Five different names", says Aśva-ghoṣa, "are given to the ego (according to its different modes of operation)." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 76.) In the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* also it is held:

"The sea-water and the waves,  
One varies not from the other:  
It is even so with the mind and its activities;  
Citta is Karma-accumulating,  
Manas reflects an objective world,  
Mano-vijñāna is the faculty of judgment,  
The five vijñānas are the differentiating senses."

(*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, quoted in Suzuki's *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 131.)

From the point of view of grossness and limitation, there may be distinguished three grades in the manifestation of the Mind, the monad, the ego, and the body (*Jīva*, *Ahaṁ-kāra* and *Deha*). *Jīva* or monad is that aspect of the Mind in which it originates as a ray from the Absolute Consciousness and is yet very subtle in character. The ego is the *Jīva* in a grosser and more limited form in which objectivity acquires a greater degree. How a *Jīva* acquires the character of an ego and becomes embodied is described by Vasiṣṭha

in the following manner: "A monad gradually becomes an ego on account of the intensity of the tendency towards objectivity, as a spark of fire grows in volume on account of the increase of fuel (III, 64, 12); as on account of depth the sky appears to be blue (III, 64, 14); and as air becomes wind. (III, 13, 15.)<sup>1</sup> How the ego becomes the body is described thus: "Through the intensity of many-sided imagining activity, the monad knows itself in the form of 'I am this' (III, 13, 22), and imagines a starlike form for itself, which is later on further differentiated as the body. (III, 13, 23.) It then desires to see, makes an effort to see, and immediately there arise two holes in the form with which it has identified itself, which evolve into the eyes. (III, 13, 28.) *Pari pasu* with the desire to see is created on the objective side the subtle object of vision. (III, 67, 48.) In the same way that with which it touches becomes the skin, and through which it hears becomes its ears (III, 13, 29); that with which it smells becomes the nose and that with which it tastes becomes the tongue. (III, 13, 30.) On the objective side evolve the corresponding objects of all the senses (in its experience). (III, 67, 49.) Those with which the monad acts in accordance with its desires, become the organs of action. (III, 13, 31.) In this way by the power of desire are experienced by the monad, the objects, their perceptions and ideas. (III, 13, 31.) The monad, now stands clothed in the eight-fold subtle body—mind, intellect, ego, and the five

<sup>1</sup> तदेव घनसंविद्या याल्लहंतामनुकमात् ।

बहुवशुः स्वेन्वनाधिक्यात्स्वा प्रकाशकतामिव ॥

स्वयैतया घनतया नीलिमानमिवाम्बरम् ।

स्वयं संकल्पवशतो वातस्पन्द इव स्फुरन् ॥



subtle elements. (III, 13, 32; VIb, 51, 50.) This subtle body is gradually experienced as the physical body in the uterus, through the intensity of thought." (III, 13, 34).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the limitation of the monad to the physical body is self-created. "It enters the bondage (of the body) by itself like a silk-worm. (IV, 42, 31.) It imagines the body by its own thought, gets bound in it, and then repents. (IV, 42, 32.) It enters the network of objects created by its own imagination, and becomes helpless like a caged lion." (IV, 42, 34.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यथामावितमत्रार्थभाविताद्विश्वरूपतः ।

स एव स्वात्मा सततोऽप्ययं सोऽहमिति न्वयम् ॥

चित्तात्प्रत्ययमाधत्ते स्वप्ने स्वामिव पान्थताम् ।

तारकाकारमाकारं भाविदेहाभिधं तथा ॥

भावयत्येति तद्भावं चित्तं चेत्यर्थतामिव ।

प्रेक्षेऽहमिति भावेन द्रष्टुं प्रसरतीव खे ।

ततो रन्ध्रद्वयेनैव भाविबाह्याभिधं पुनः ॥

येन पश्यति तन्नेत्रयुगं नाम्ना भविष्यति ।

येन स्पृशति सा वै त्वग्यच्छृणोति श्रुतिस्तु सा ॥

येन जिघ्रति तद् घ्राणं स स्वमात्मनि पश्यति ।

तत्तस्य स्वदनं पश्चाद्भ्रसना चोद्धृसिष्यति ॥

स्थितो यस्मिन्भवतीति तावद् दृश्यादिता स्थिता ।

स्पन्दते यत्स तद्वायुश्चेष्टा कर्मेन्द्रियव्रजम् ।

रूपालोकमनस्कारजातमित्यपि भावयत् ॥

आतिवाहिकदेहात्मा तिष्ठत्यम्बरमम्बरे ॥

मनो बुद्धिरहंकारस्तथा तन्मात्रपञ्चकम् ।

इति पुर्यष्टकं प्रोक्तं देहोऽसावातिवाहिकः ॥

आतिवाहिकदेहात्मा चित्तदेहाम्बराकृतिः ।

स्वकल्पनान्त आकारमण्डसंस्थं प्रपश्यति ॥

<sup>2</sup> कोशकारक्रिमिरिव स्वेच्छया याति बन्धनम् ॥

स्वसंकल्पानुसंधानात्पाशैरिव नयन्वपुः ।

We have already seen that according to Vasiṣṭha there is no limit to the number of monads in the world, for every content of the world is a centre of conspiring activity in its own right. In the Absolute Consciousness there is no limit to the number of centres of imaginative activity. The universe is full of monads all around. "Millions and billions of monads spring from the Cosmic Mind. (IV, 43, 1.) Countless have already been born, countless are being born, countless will be born in course of time like sprays of water from a waterfall. (IV, 43, 2.) In every direction, in every place, whether land or water, innumerable monads are born and die as bubbles in water." (IV, 43, 4.)<sup>1</sup> This reminds one of a passage from Leibnitz: "There is a world of created things, of living beings, of animals, of entelechies, of souls, in the minute particle of matter. Every portion of matter can be conceived as like a garden full of plants, and like a pond full of fish. But every branch of a plant, every member of an animal, and every drop of fluid within it, is also such a garden or such a pond. And although the ground and the air which lie between the plants of the garden, and the water which is between the fish in the pond,

कष्टमस्मिन्स्वयं बन्धमेत्यात्मा परितप्यते ॥

स्वसंकल्पिततन्मात्रजालाभ्यन्तरवर्ति च ।

परां विवशतामेति शृङ्खलाबद्धसिंहवत् ॥

<sup>1</sup> एवं जीवाश्रितो भावा भवभावनयोहिताः ।

ब्रह्मणः कल्पिताकारालक्षशोऽप्यथ कोटिशः ॥

असंख्याताः पुरा जाता जायन्ते चापि वाऽद्य भोः ।

उत्पत्तिप्यन्ति चैवाम्बुकणौघा इव निर्झरात् ॥

अनारतं प्रतिदिशं देशे देशे जले स्थले ।

जायन्ते वा म्रियन्ते वा बुदबुदा इव वारिणि ॥

are not themselves plant or fish, they nevertheless contain these, usually so small, however, as to be imperceptible to us." (*Monadology*, paragraphs 66-68.)

Thus there is no end to the number of monads in the universe. Yet we can have some *apriori* principle of division of all the monads into definite groups or classes. Several bases of division may be suggested. Vasiṣṭha has attempted three divisions on three different bases. In one place he has divided the monads of the universe on the basis of the density of their ignorance. At another place we find a division of monads on the basis of the nature of their experience. A third division is attempted on the basis of their fitness for Self-realization.

The following are the seven grades of density of the ignorance (or objectivity of experience) of monads according to Vasiṣṭha: "The *Bija-jāgrat* (potential waking), the *Jāgrat* (ordinary waking), the *Mahā-jāgrat* (intense waking), the *Jāgrat-svapna* (the waking dream), the *Svapna* (dream), the *Svapna-jāgrat* (dreaming wakefulness), and *Suṣupti* (deep sleep). (III, 117, 11-12.) These are thus briefly characterized:

(1) "The first stress in Consciousness which afterwards is called the monad and which is the seed of all future experience is called the 'potential waking' state of the monad." (III, 117, 13-14.)

(2) "When a newly evolved monad from the Absolute Consciousness has acquired the sense of ego and possession ('I and mine'), it is said to be in the state of waking." (III, 117, 15-16.)

(3) "When by passing through a number of incarnations the idea 'I and mine' gets intensified, the monad is said to be in the state of intense wakefulness." (III, 117, 16-17.)



(4) "The state of fancy or imagination, whether of short or long duration, is called a waking dream experience. (III, 117, 17-18.)

(5) "The impression, after a state of sleep, that something was experienced as real during sleep, although it is not so, is called dream." (III, 117, 19-20.)

(6) "That very experience, when, on account of being repeated several times, it becomes dense and acquires the intensity of wakefulness, is called the dreaming wakefulness." (III, 117, 20-21.)

(7) "That insensible (unconscious) state of existence of a monad is called deep sleep (*susupti*), when none of the above six states are experienced by it, but there is still the potentiality of future world-experience and suffering present in it. (III, 117, 22-23.) All the so-called inert objects—a straw, a lump of clay, a stone, etc.—exist in that state of insensibility." (III, 117, 24.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> बीजजाग्रतथा जाग्रन्महाजाग्रतथैव च ॥

जाग्रत्स्वप्नस्तथा स्वप्नः स्वप्नजाग्रत्सुषुप्तकम् ॥

प्रथमे चेतनं यत्स्यादनाख्यं निर्मलं चितः ॥

भविष्यच्चित्तजीवादिनामशब्दार्थमाजनम् ।

बीजरूपं स्थितं जाग्रद्वीजजाग्रतदुच्यते ॥

नवप्रसूतस्य परादयं चाहमिदं मम ॥

इति यः प्रत्ययः स्वस्थस्तजाग्रत्प्रागभावनात् ।

अयं सोऽहमिदं तन्म इति जन्मान्तरोदितः ॥

पीवरः प्रत्ययः प्रोक्तो महाजाग्रदिति स्फुरन् ।

अरूढमथ वा रूढं सर्वथा तन्मयात्मकम् ॥

यजाग्रतो मनोराज्यं जाग्रत्स्वप्नः स उच्यते ।

द्विचन्द्रशुक्तिकारूप्यमृगातृष्णादिभेदतः ॥

अभ्यासात्प्राप्य जाग्रत्त्वं स्वप्नोऽनेकविधो भवेत् ।

अल्पकालं मया दृष्टमेवं नो सत्यमित्यपि ॥

This division would be intelligible, if we remember that waking, dream and sleep mean here various grades, through which our experience of the objective world becomes stable and fully materialized. Sleep is probably that stage of the idea of objectivity, when it is present as a sort of vague and undifferentiated continuum in which no definite features are yet noticeable. Dream is the name given to the next stage of objectivity, when differentiations begin to appear in the objective continuum, but they are still very subtle and unstable in form. When the differentiated aspects of the objective experience acquire definiteness, stability and intensity of materialization, such experience is called the waking experience. Vasiṣṭha has thus distinguished here the seven kinds of monads on the basis of their being more or less intensely aware of their objective experience.

In order to understand another division of monads attempted by Vasiṣṭha, we must remember his doctrine of the possibility of world-experiences within world-experiences expounded in the last chapter. According to him the individuals that are the contents of our dreams, have also a right to be recognized as individual monads in their own right; and it is also possible that we may

निद्राकालानुभूतेऽर्थे निद्रान्ते प्रलयो हि यः ।  
 स स्वप्नः कथितस्तस्य महाजाग्रत्स्थितेर्हृदि ॥  
 चिरसंदर्शनाभावादप्रफुल्लवृहद्वपुः ।  
 स्वप्नो जाग्रत्तया रूढो महाजाग्रत्पदं गतः ॥  
 अक्षते वा क्षते देहे स्वप्नजाग्रन्मतं हि तत् ।  
 षडवस्थापरित्यागे जडा जीवस्य या स्थितिः ।  
 भविष्यद्दुःखरोधाब्धा सौषुप्ती सोच्यते गतिः ।  
 एते तस्यामवस्थायां तृणलोष्टशिलादयः ।  
 पदार्थाः संस्थिताः सर्वे परमाणुप्रमाणिनः ॥

be the dream-personalities of some one like Brahmā or the Cosmic Mind of our Cosmos. On such considerations Vasiṣṭha attempts another division of monads in the following manner:<sup>1</sup> "Monads are said to be of seven kinds: *Svapna-jāgarah* (those whose dreams are others' waking experiences), *Samkalpa-jāgarah* (those whose world of fancy is a waking world for others), *Kevala-jāgarah*

<sup>1</sup> ते स्वप्नजागराः केचित्केचित्संकल्पजागराः ।

केचित्केवलजाग्रत्स्थाश्चिराज्जाग्रत्स्थिताः परे ॥

घनजाग्रत्स्थिताश्चान्ये जाग्रत्स्वप्नास्तथेतरे ।

क्षीणजागरकाः केचिज्जीवाः सप्तविधाः स्मृताः ॥

कस्मिंश्चित्प्राक्तने कल्पे कस्मिंश्चिज्जगति क्वचित् ।

केचित्सुप्ताः स्थिता देहैर्जीवा जीवितवर्मिणः ॥

ये स्वप्नमभिपश्यन्ति तेषां स्वप्नमिदं जगत् ।

विद्धि ते हि खल्वच्यन्ते जीवकाः स्वप्नजागराः ॥

क्वचिदेव प्रसुप्तानां यः स्वप्नः स्वयमुत्थितः ।

विषयः सोऽयमस्माकं तेषां स्वप्ननरा वयम् ॥

तेषां चिरतया स्वप्नः स जाग्रत्त्वमुपागतः ॥

कस्मिंश्चित्प्राक्तने कल्पे कस्मिंश्चिज्जगति क्वचित् ।

अनिद्रालव एवान्तःसंकल्पैकपराः स्थिताः ॥

ध्यानाद्विलुठिता वाऽथ मनोराज्यवशानुगाः ।

संकल्पदार्ढ्यमापन्ना गलिताप्रानुभूतयः ॥

संकल्प एव जाग्रत्त्वं येषां चिरतयांशतः ।

तत्रास्तमितचेष्टानां ते हि संकल्पजागराः ॥

देहे तेषां वयमिमे संकल्पपुरुषाः स्थिताः ॥

प्राथम्येनावतीर्णास्ते ब्रह्मणो ब्रूहितात्मनः ।

प्रोक्ताः केवलजागर्याः प्रागुत्पत्त्यविकासिनः ॥

भूयो जन्मान्तरगतास्त एव चिरजागराः ।

कथ्यन्ते प्रौढिमायाताः कार्यकारणचारिणः ॥

त एव दुष्कृतावेशाज्जडस्थावरतां गताः ।

घनजाग्रत्तया प्रोक्ता जाग्रत्सु घनतां गताः ॥



(waking alone), *Cira-jāgarah* (waking since a long time), *Ghana-jāgarah* (intensely waking), *Jagrat-svapnāh* (waking dreamers), and *Kṣīṇa-jāgarah* (whose waking experience has lost its intensity)". (Vib, 50, 2-3.)

They are thus described:

(1) "The *svapna-jāgarah* are those monads that belong to some other time-space order, and are sleeping there and dreaming various dreams. But perchance, what is a dream-experience to them is our waking world. Their dream-objects are real things for us; and we (who are individuals in our own right) are persons of their dream. On account of the long duration of their dreams, we are feeling it to be a real wakeful world-experience." (Vib, 50, 5-8.)

(2) "The *Samkalpa-jāgarah* are those monads of some other time-space order that are so much given to their thoughts of imagination that they have become quite unconscious of the actual world they are living in. Their world of fancy, on account of their exclusive thought directed to it, has come to acquire the stability of the waking experience. The contents of their world of fancy have acquired individuality of their own and live their own lives." (Vib, 50, 14-17.)

(3) "The *Kevala-jāgarah* are those monads that have for the first time evolved from the Brahman and are experiencing the world." (Vib, 50, 19.)

(4) "The *Cira-jāgarah* are those monads that were evolved from the Brahman like the former class, but to them this world has become a very hard and stable

ये तु शास्त्रार्थसत्सङ्गचोचिता बोधमागताः ।

पश्यन्ति स्वप्नवजाग्रजप्रतत्त्वान् भवन्ति ते ॥

ये तु संप्राप्तसंबोधा विश्रान्ताः परमे पदे ।

क्षीणजग्रत्प्रभृतयस्ते तुर्यो भूमिकां गताः ॥

reality governed by the law of causality, on account of their having passed through repeated births and deaths." (VIb, 50, 20.)

(5) "The *Ghana-jāgarah* are those monads that, on account of their repeatedly performed evil actions, have lapsed into the unconscious or inanimate state of existence. They are called the deeply waking class because their objectivity has become deeply intensified." (VIb, 50, 21.)

(6) "The *Jāgrat-svapnah* are those monads that, having become enlightened by the study of philosophical works and association with the wise, have begun to look upon their waking world as a dream." (VIb, 50, 22.)

(7) "The *Kṣīṇa-jāgarah* are those enlightened monads that have found peace in the Absolute Reality and stay in the *Turya* (fourth) state of experience, and for whom all other kinds of experience have lost their validity." (VIb, 50, 23.)

In another place he classifies monads into the following fourteen kinds:<sup>1</sup>

(1) "The *Idam-prathamata* is the class of those monads that in their very first birth (life) are prone to

<sup>1</sup> इदंप्रथमतोत्पन्नो योऽस्मिन्नेव हि जन्मनि ।

इदंप्रथमतानाम्नी शुभाभ्याससमुद्भवा ॥

शुभलोकाश्रया सा च शुभकार्यानुबन्धिनी ।

सा चेद्विचित्रसंसारवासनाव्यवहारिणी ॥

भवैः कतिपर्यैर्मोक्षमित्युक्ता गुणपीवरी ।

तादृक्फलप्रदानैककार्याकार्यानुमानदा ॥

तेन राम ससत्त्वेति प्रोच्यते सा कृतात्मभिः ।

अथ चेद्विचित्रसंसारवासनाव्यवहारिणी ॥

अत्यन्तकलुषा जन्मसहस्रैर्ज्ञानभागिनी ।

तादृक्कलुषप्रदानैकधर्माधर्मानुमानदा ॥

good thoughts and actions which bring about good results. (III, 94, 2-3.)

(2) "The *Guṇa-pīvarī* is the class of those monads that in their very first birth begin to cherish desires for worldly objects, and attain liberation having passed through many cycles of transmigration. (III, 94, 3-4.)

असावधमसत्त्वेति तेन साधुभिरुच्यते ।  
 सैव संख्यातिगानन्तजन्मवृन्दादनन्तरम् ॥  
 संदिग्धमोक्षा यदि तत्प्रोच्यतेऽत्यन्ततामसी ।  
 अनद्यतनजन्मा तु जातिस्तादृशकारिणो ॥  
 योत्पत्तिर्मध्यमा पुंसो राम द्वित्रिभवान्तरा ।  
 तादृक्कार्या तु सा लोके राजसी राजसत्तम ॥  
 अविप्रकृष्टजन्माऽपि सोच्यते कृतबुद्धिभिः ।  
 सा हि तन्मृतिमात्रेण मोक्षयोग्या मुमुक्षुभिः ॥  
 तादृक्कार्यानुमानेन प्रोक्ता राजससात्त्विकी ।  
 सर्व चेदितरैरल्पैर्जन्मभिर्मोक्षभागिनी ॥  
 तत्तादृशी हि सा तज्ज्ञैः प्रोक्ता राजसराजसी ।  
 सैव जन्मशतैर्मोक्षभागिनी चेच्चिरैषिणी ॥  
 त्वदुक्ता तादृशारम्भा सद्गी राजसतामसी ।  
 सैव संदिग्धमोक्षा चेत्सहस्रैरपि जन्मनाम् ॥  
 तदुक्ता तादृशारम्भा राजसात्यन्ततामसी ।  
 भुक्तजन्मसहस्रा तु योत्पत्तिर्ब्रह्मणो नृणाम् ॥  
 चिरमोक्षा हि कथिता तामसी सा महर्षभिः ।  
 तज्जन्मनैव मोक्षस्य भागिनी चेत्तदुच्यते ॥  
 तज्ज्ञैस्तामससत्त्वेति तादृशारम्भशालिनी ।  
 भवैः कतिपयैर्मोक्षभागिनी चेत्तदुच्यते ॥  
 तमोराजसरूपेति तादृशैर्गुणवृंहितैः ।  
 पूर्वजन्मसहस्राख्या पुरोजन्मशतैरपि ॥  
 मोक्षयोग्या ततः प्रोक्ता तज्ज्ञैस्तामसतामसी ।  
 पूर्वं तु जन्मलक्षाख्या जन्मलक्षैः पुरोऽपि चेत् ॥  
 संदिग्धमोक्षा तदसौ प्रोच्यतेऽत्यन्ततामसी ॥



(3) "The *Sasattva* is the class of those monads that think of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done (*i.e.*, have moral consciousness awakened), and choose only those actions which are favourable to liberation. (III, 94, 4-5.)

(4) "The *Adhama-sattva* is the class of those monads that have previously indulged in desires for worldly objects and so have got themselves bound to the world through thousands of transmigrations, but now have acquired the power of discrimination between a right and a wrong course of action, and prefer the former to the latter. (III, 94, 5-7.)

(5) "The *Atyanta-tāmasī* is the class of those monads that are yet far from liberation even though they have passed through innumerable births and deaths. (III, 94, 7-8.)

(6) "The *Rajasī* is the class of those monads that having passed through two or three lives of other (worse) kinds are now born with moderate qualities and active habits. (III, 94, 8-9.)

(7) "The *Rajasa-sāttvikī* is the class of those monads whose actions are free from blemishes and who deserve to be liberated after the dissolution of their present bodies. (III, 94, 9-10.)

(8) "The *Rajasa-rājasī* is the class of those monads that deserve liberation after some more lives. (III, 94, 11-12.)

(9) "The *Rajasa-tāmasī* is the class of those monads that require hundreds of more lives to live, before they are capable of liberation. (III, 94, 12-13.)

(10) "The *Rajasātyanta-tāmasī* is the class of those monads whose actions are such that their liberation is uncertain even after thousands of lives. (III, 94, 13-14.)

(11) "*Tāmasī* is the class of those monads that have passed through thousands of lives since their origin

from Brahmā and are still a long way from liberation. (III, 94, 14-15.)

(12) "The *Tamasa-sattva* is the class of those beings who have already passed through a long course of lives and deaths, but now stand on such a level of progress that, if they make efforts, they can attain liberation after this life. (III, 94, 15-16.)

(13) "The *Tamo-rājasī* is that class of monads that have already passed through countless lives in the past, and yet have to undergo many more before they would attain liberation. (III, 94, 16-17.)

(14) "The *Tamasa-tāmasī* is the class of those worst kind of monads that have already undergone millions of lives in the past and still have to undergo millions more before they can attain liberation." (III, 94, 17-19.)

All the various kinds of monads in a cosmos originate according to Vasiṣṭha from the Cosmic Mind (Brahmā) in the same way as the creatures of our dreams originate from our minds. "All these kinds of monads originate from Brahmā. (III, 94, 19.) All the monads, in fact everything in the objective world, have sprung from Brahmā, in the same way as billows have from an agitated ocean, streaks of light from a burning lamp, beams from the disc of the moon, flowers from a tree, ornaments from gold, sprays from a water-spring, particular spaces from infinite space, whirls, eddies and waves from water, and mirage-rivers from the rays of the sun." (III, 94, 20-28.)<sup>1</sup> Fawcett similarly

<sup>1</sup> सर्वा एताः समायान्ति ब्रह्मणो भूतजास्तयः ॥

किञ्चित्प्रचलिता भोगात्पयोराशेरिवोर्मयः ।

स्वतेजःस्पन्दिताभोगादीपादिव मरीचयः ।

स्वमरीचिबलोद्भूता ज्वलिताग्नेः कणा इव ।

holds: "Finite sentient, while enjoying truly free creative initiative and being, accordingly, relatively independent, presuppose, nevertheless, the Universal Consciring (Brahmā of Vasiṣṭha) as their source." (Fawcett: *Divine Imagining*, p. 59.)

The law of origination and mergence, it may also be noted, is the same in the case of every monad down from Brahmā to an insect. "As a Brahmā originates, so does an insect. All monads (from the Brahmā to the lowest insect) merge in the Absolute Reality through right knowledge." (III, 67, 69-68.)<sup>1</sup>

Before concluding this chapter, it may also be pointed out, that Vasiṣṭha is a thoroughgoing pan-psychist. He believes that everything in this universe has a subtle mental operation behind it. "All objects have their mental aspect (*citta-sarvatvam*). (III, 40, 20.) There is the mind behind every particle of dust; it fills the whole space; it grows within every sprout; it moves as a sap in tender leaves. (III, 40, 21.) It rises up in the waves of the ocean; it dances within the womb of a rock. It rains in clouds; and lies inert in a piece of stone. (III, 40, 22.) Even in inert things resides desire in a potential form, as flowers, etc., in their seeds."

मन्दारमञ्जरीरूपाश्चन्द्रबिम्बादिवांशवः ॥

यथा विटपिनिश्चित्रास्तद्रूपा विटपश्चियः ।

कटकाद्भद्रकेयूरयुक्तयः कनकादिव ॥

निर्झरादमलोद्भयोतात्पयसामिव बिन्दवः ।

आकाशस्य घटस्थालीरन्ध्राकाशादयो यथा ॥

सीकरावतलहरीबिन्दवः पयसो यथा ।

मृगतृष्णातरङ्गिण्यो यथा भास्करतेजसः ॥

<sup>1</sup> यथा संपद्यते ब्रह्मा कीटः संपद्यते तथा ।

आ ब्रह्मकीटसंविन्देः सम्यक्संवेदनात्क्षयः ॥



(VIb, 10, 19.)<sup>1</sup> It is quite evident that pan-psychism is the inevitable conclusion of his idealism, according to which all things are thoughts ultimately, and every thought is an entity in itself. Vasiṣṭha will agree with Fawcett who writes: "Nature is aglow with *psychical* life in every quarter and cranny. It is of one tissue with the psychical reality noticed in ourselves" (Fawcett: *World as Imagination*, p. 162); and with Royce who rightly says: "We have no right whatsoever to speak of really unconscious Nature, but only of uncommunicative Nature, whose mental processes go on at such different time-rates from ours, that we cannot adjust ourselves to a live appreciation of their inward fluency; although our consciousness does make us aware of their presence." (Royce: *The World and the Individual*, 2nd Series, p. 225.) Vasiṣṭha would further say that by undergoing an appropriate training we can communicate with the beings behind Nature.

<sup>1</sup> एतच्चित्तशरीरत्वं विद्धि सर्वगतोदयम् ॥  
 वसति त्रसरेण्वन्तर्निपते गगनोदरे ।  
 लीयतेऽङ्कुरकोशेषु रसीभवति पल्लवे ॥  
 उल्लसत्यम्बुर्वाचित्वे प्रवृत्त्यति शिलोदरे ।  
 प्रवर्षत्यम्बुदो भूत्वा शिलीभूयावतिष्ठते ॥  
 यथा बीजेषु पुष्पादि मृदो राशौ घटो यथा ।  
 तथाऽन्तः संस्थिता साधो स्थावरेषु स्ववासना ॥

## CHAPTER V

### THOUGHT-POWER

Now-a-days we hear much about the power of thought. Enormous literature has been written on thought-power. The works of James Allen, Trine, Marden and Larson, to mention a few of the writers on the power of thought, are passing through several editions. Experiments are made in the laboratories of the West, and specially in America, to study the effect of thought on the health and strength of the thinker of particular kinds of thought. A new school of thought, generally called the "New Thought" which believes in the omnipotence of thought, is rising into prominence. But it is a matter of great surprise and satisfaction that what is considered to be a new thought in the twentieth century after Christ is a very ancient doctrine of India and is found worked out in many aspects and details in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. The Seer of the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* said long ago: "Whatever worlds the man of pure heart covets by his mind, and whatever objects he wishes to get, he gains those worlds and those objects." (*M. U.*, III, 1, 10.) The Buddha taught: All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts." (Carus: *The Gospel of Buddha*, p. 111.) Nothing will appear radically new in the so-called

"New Thought", when all that Vasiṣṭha has said in this connection is known. Swami Rāma Tirtha rightly said in one of his Lectures to the people of America: "All your New Thought is the old antiquated thought of the Hindus. In order to get the genuine centre, the whole truth and all the new thought, Blessed ones, you have yet to wait a little and get more knowledge from India. Most of those wonderful writings have not yet been translated into your language, such as the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* which deals with all the new thought of America." (*In Woods of God-realization*, Vol. III, p. 327.) Here we shall try to present briefly what Vasiṣṭha has said on the power of thought or mind, comparing here and there his views with the most up-to-date thinkers of the New Thought school.

The Mind, according to Vasiṣṭha is omnipotent. "It is capable of accomplishing everything. (III, 91, 16.) As it imagines within itself, so things happen forthwith. (III, 91, 52.) Whatever is intensely thought by the mind, that comes to be materialized and effected." (III, 91, 17.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what Dr. Charles Gilbert Davis says: "I say that thought is omnipotent—that the mind is all-powerful." (Davis: *The Philosophy of Life*, p. 53.) The mind is endowed with creative power. "It can evolve objects from within itself. (III, 66, 6.) It is the creator of the world which appears in just the form that is fashioned by the mind. (VIb, 139, 1.) Time and space also appear as the mind thinks them

<sup>1</sup> स्वरूपं सर्वकृत्वं च शक्तत्वं मनसो मुने ॥

यद्यैतद्भावयेत्स्वान्तं तथैव भवति क्षणात् ॥

प्रतिभासमुपायाति यद्यदस्य हि चेतसः ।

तत्तत्प्रकटतामेति स्थैर्यं सफलतामपि ॥



to be." (III, 103, 14.)<sup>1</sup> Marden says: "Mind is the only creator. Nothing ever was or ever will be created or recreated except through mind." (O. S. Marden: *The Miracle of Right Thought*, p. 227.) Davis says "Thought is the stuff out of which things are made" (*The Philosophy of Life*, Motto); and "The Mind is all, it is everything. All matter is but a materialization of consciousness." (*Ibid.*, p. 32.) In creating a world for itself, the mind is absolutely free and not determined by any other external force. "The Mind imagines the world and the body in accordance with its own free-willing like a magic scene." (III, 4, 79.)<sup>2</sup> We should not be under the impression that creative power belongs only to a select few minds. It is the privilege of every mind. "Every mind (*praty-ekam cittam*) has this power." (III, 40, 29.)<sup>3</sup>

We all attain what we aspire after. All that we intensely desire for comes to us early or late, in accordance with the effort we put in to acquire it. Our own efforts, guided by our aspirations, are the warp and woof of our destiny. "Every individual can attain all that he desires. (III, 45, 12.) Whoever

<sup>1</sup> विचित्रबुद्बुदोल्लासे स्वात्मनो व्यतिरेकिणि ।

यथा सुरायाः सामर्थ्यं तथा चित्तस्य संसृतौ ॥

चित्तमेव जगत्कर्तुं संकल्पयति यद्यथा ।

असत्सत्सदसच्चैव तत्तथा तस्य तिष्ठति ॥

कल्पं क्षणीकरोत्यन्तः क्षणं नयति कल्पताम् ।

मनस्तदायत्तमतो देशकालक्रमं विदुः ॥

<sup>2</sup> तत्स्वयं स्वैरमेवाशु संकल्पयति देहकम् ।

तेनेयमिन्द्रजालश्रीर्विततेन वितन्यते ॥

<sup>3</sup> प्रत्येकमेव यच्चित्तं तदेवंरूपशक्तिकम् ॥

strives to attain anything attains that surely." (III, 45, 18.)<sup>1</sup> No other agency can confer favours upon us, unless we deserve them. Whatever we seem to get through others, is the outcome of our own aspirations and effort. "The mind itself is the giver of the results of its own efforts, although it may do so in the garb of a god or penance. (III, 45, 19.) There is nothing other than one's own effort that ever brings him anything good. (III, 45, 20.) No other being is responsible for what one acquires, as everything is the consequence of his thought. (IV, 13, 11.) There is nothing under the sun which cannot be attained by anybody through right exertion." (III, 62, 8.)<sup>2</sup> Marden similarly says: "The cause of whatever comes to you in life is within you." (Marden: *Peace, Power and Plenty*, p. 99.)

The nature of things around us is as we think it to be. Our lives are what we make them by our thought. All that we are, is how we have thought. Thoughts are the bricks with which we build the mansion of our personality. Thought determines our destiny.

<sup>1</sup> सर्वं संपादयत्याशु स्वयं जीवः स्वमीहितम् ॥

यस्य यस्य यथोदेति स्वचित्प्रयतनं चिरम् ।

फलं ददाति कालेन तस्य तस्य तथा तथा ॥

<sup>2</sup> तपो वा देवता वाऽपि भूत्वा स्वैव चिदन्यथा ।

फलं ददात्यथ स्वैरं नभःफलनिपातवत् ॥

स्वसंविद्यतनादन्यन्न किञ्चिच्च कदाचन ।

फलं ददाति तेनाशु यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥

स्वया वासनया लोको यत्कर्म करोति यः ।

स तथैव तदामोति नेतरस्येह कर्तृता ॥

न तदस्ति जगत्कोशे शुभकर्मानुपातिना ।

यत्पौरुषेण शुद्धेन न समासाद्यते जनैः ॥

We become what we wish, desire and imagine to become. The world around us is the reflex of our thought. It changes its appearance as we change. The extent of space as well as the duration of time are relative to our thoughts and emotions. "An individual becomes what he sets his heart to. (III, 56, 28.) The nature of the objects is as it is believed to be. (III, 56, 30.) Even poison can be turned into nectar by being constantly imagined to be so, and an enemy will behave as a friend, if one has faith in him to be so. (III, 60, 17.) One experiences as one thinks. (III, 60, 16.) If a moment is imagined to be an age, it is experienced as such, and *vice versa*. (III, 60, 20-21.) The same period of night is experienced as a long age by the troubled mind, and as a moment by the merry. (III, 60, 22.) Sweet is experienced as bitter and *vice versa* by intense thought. (III, 60, 27-28.) Sometimes people are killed on account of their own imagination of an absolutely non-existent devil. (III, 60, 33.) One experiences only that to be real, which one thinks to be so. (VIb, 100, 3.) One is affected by things only in accordance with his ideas about them. (VIb, 148, 5.) It is by thought alone that we get into delusion, undergo the experience of birth and death, are bound in the world and become released from it. (IV, 4, 9.) All our states of happiness or misery in heaven or the hell, are effects of our own thought." (IV, 23, 13.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यच्चित्तं तन्मयो जन्तुर्भवतीत्यनुभूतयः ॥

यथा भावनमेतेषां पदार्थानां हि सत्यता ॥

अमृतत्वं विषं याति सदैवामृतवेदनात् ।

शुत्रुर्मित्रत्वमायाति मित्रसंविच्चिबेदनात् ॥



Early or late, in this life or lives to come, all our desires, wishes and even passing thoughts have to be realized. But what is desired or thought intensely with warmth of faith is soon realized. Faith, intense belief, or *bhāvanā* is the secret of all our achievements, as a modern writer puts it: "Faith is the hidden secret of everything; the key that unlocks every door that may exist in the universe; faith is the perfect way to that inner world from which all things proceed; faith is the royal path to unbounded power; . . . faith is the hidden secret to every desire and need of man." (Larson: *The Hidden Secret*, p. 10.) The world around us is only what we believe it to be.

येन येन यथा यद्यदा संवेद्यतेऽनघ ।  
 तेन तेन तथा तत्तदा समनुभूयते ॥  
 निमेषे यदि कल्पौघसंविदं परिविन्दति ।  
 निमेष एव तत्कल्पो भवत्यत्र न संशयः ॥  
 कल्पे यदि निमेषत्वं वेत्ति कल्पोऽप्यसौ ततः ।  
 निमेषीभवति क्षिप्रं तादृगरूपात्मिका हि चित् ॥  
 दुःखितस्य निशा कल्पः सुखितस्यैव च क्षणः ॥  
 मधुरं कटुतामेति कटुभावेन चिन्तितम् ॥  
 कटुं चायाति माधुर्यं मधुरत्वेन चिन्तितम् ॥  
 असद्यश्चो विमूढानां प्राणानप्यपकर्षति ॥  
 यं यं निश्चयमादत्ते संविदन्तरखण्डितम् ।  
 तत्तथैवानुभवति प्रत्यक्षमिति सर्वगम् ॥  
 यं यं निश्चयमादत्ते संवित्सुदृढनिश्चया ।  
 तथा तथा भवत्येषां फलयुक्तत्वभावतः ॥  
 मनो मोहमुपादत्ते क्षियते जायते मनः ।  
 तत्स्वचिन्ताप्रसादेन बध्यते मुच्यते पुनः ॥  
 ये सर्गा नरका भोगा या जन्ममरणैकणा ।  
 स्वमनोमननेनेदं स निष्पन्दोऽपि दुःखदः ॥

Our perceptions are coloured by our beliefs. That alone appears to be real for us in the reality of which we have faith. "The mind perceives and continues to perceive an object in that very form in which it imagines it to be with intense faith. (IV, 21, 56-57.) There is nothing true or false in itself; everything is as it is believed to be. (IV, 21, 58.) In accordance with one's long-standing and intensified belief, does one work, accomplish and achieve the objects of his desire and enjoying them gets bound. (IV, 21, 20-21.) One thinks that alone to be real on which one has pinned his faith and believes that there is nothing better than it. (IV, 21, 22.) People have different conceptions of duty, value, enjoyment, and liberation, in accordance with their different convictions and strive after their own ideals. (IV, 21, 23.) Whatever a pure mind strongly believes something to be that it soon becomes. (IV, 17, 4.) Poison becomes nectar and the unreal becomes the real through one's faith. (III, 56, 31.) We perceive only what we believe." (VIa, 51, 3.)<sup>1</sup>

१ दृढभावनया चेतो यद्यथा भावयत्यलम् ॥  
 तत्तत्फलं तदाकारं तावत्कालं प्रपश्यति ।  
 न तदस्ति न यत्सत्यं न तदस्ति न यन्मृषा ॥  
 यद्यथा येन निर्णीतं तत्तथा तेन लक्ष्यते ॥  
 यादृशं भावमादत्ते दृढाभ्यासवशान्मनः ।  
 तथा क्रियां तत्फलतां निष्पादयति चादरात् ।  
 ततस्तमेव चास्वादमनुभूयाशु बध्यते ॥  
 यं यं भावमुपादत्ते तं तं वस्त्विति विन्दति ।  
 तत्तच्छ्रेयोऽन्यन्नास्तीति निश्चयोऽस्य च जायते ॥  
 धर्मार्थकाममोक्षार्थं प्रयतन्ते सदैव हि ।  
 मनांसि दृढभिन्नानि प्रतिपत्त्या स्वयैव च ॥  
 मनो निर्मलसरत्वात्म यद्भावयति यादृशम् ।

Our thoughts are powerful in proportion to their intensity, depth and warmth. They become so by their being constantly and over and over again cherished. This is what Vasiṣṭha calls *abhyāsa* (practice or habit). Constant thinking, desiring or imagining of the same idea contributes much to the materialization of that idea. "Doing the same thing over and over again is called *abhyāsa*. It is also termed *puruṣārtha*. Without it nothing can be achieved. (VIb, 67, 43.) Things become what they are repeatedly thought to be. (VIb, 67, 20.) The mental or subtle body becomes physical, only through repeatedly being imagined to be so, and so also can the physical body be realized to be subtle, through constant meditation on its being so. (VIb, 67, 30-31.) Through repeated efforts even the most difficult things can be realized; even poison can be turned into nectar by repeatedly thinking it to be so. (VIb, 67, 33.) Constant and repeated effort along any line is the secret of success." (VIb, 67, 44.)<sup>1</sup>

तत्तथाऽऽशु भवत्येव यथाऽऽवर्तो भवेत्पयः ॥

यथा वासनया जन्तोर्विषमयमृतायते ।

असत्यः सत्यतामेति पदार्थो भावनात्तथा ॥

यद्यथा भावयत्याशु तत्तथा परिपश्यति ॥

<sup>1</sup> पौनःपुन्येन करणमभ्यास इति कथ्यते ।

पुरुषार्थः स एवेह तेनास्ति न विना गतिः ॥

योऽभ्यासः प्रकचत्यन्तः शुद्धचिन्मसो रसात् ।

भवेत्तन्मयमेवान्तरावात्मिव लक्ष्यते ॥

आतिवाहिकदेहोऽयं शुद्धचिद्वयोम केवलम् ।

आधिभौतिकतामेति भावनाभ्यासयोगतः ॥

आधिभौतिकदेहोऽसौ धारणाभ्यासभावनात् ।

विहङ्गचत्वरम्भ्येति पश्याभ्यासविजृम्भितम् ॥



Unflinching and strong determination (*dr̥ḍha-niscaya*) is another very important factor which contributes to the realization of our thoughts and desires. There is nothing in the world which does not yield to the strong determination of a man. There is no force that can withstand the power of a determined mind. Persons with unflinching determination can realize everything they set their heart to. They see nothing but their own idea dancing around them. We are bound to our strongly determined ideas; no one else can change the mind of a well-determined man. "There is no power in the world to withstand the determination of a mind. (III, 88, 18.) Whatever idea has taken root in some mind, cannot be rooted out by any other but that very mind. (III, 88, 19.) The idea that has been deeply planted in some mind cannot be removed from it by any agency, such as even death or a curse (*śāpa*)." (III, 88, 20.)<sup>1</sup>

All what we are, all what we have, and all that we shall be, is thus the result of our thought. Our destiny is not mapped out for us by some other agency but our own thought. "Control thought," as Davis says, "and you control destiny." (*Philosophy of Life*, p. 33.) We become as we think. We have only as much

दुःसाध्याः सिद्धिमायान्ति रिपवो यान्ति मित्रताम् ।

विषाण्यमृततां यान्ति संतताभ्यासयोगतः ॥

दृढाभ्यासाभिधानेन यत्ननाम्ना स्वकर्मणा ।

निजवेदनजेनैव सिद्धिर्भवति नान्यथा ॥

<sup>1</sup> न मनोनिश्चयकृतं कश्चिद्रोधयितुं क्षमः ॥

यो बद्धपदतां यातो जन्तोर्मनसि निश्चयः ।

स तेनैव विना ब्रह्मज्ञान्येन विनिवार्यते ॥

बहुकालं यदभ्यस्तं मनसा दृढनिश्चयम् ।

ज्ञापेनापि न तस्यास्ति क्षयो नष्टेऽपि देहके ॥

power as we imagine we have. The world around us is as we have willed it to be. We can change it even to-day if we will so. We are living in an infinite ocean of power and bliss, and appropriate only so much from it as we think, believe and imagine. "Our present state is what has been willed, and can be changed with effort into another. (III, 40, 13.) If one believes himself to be separate from the Absolute Reality, he is so; if one thinks himself to be the Brahman, he is so. We limit ourselves by our thought. (III, 67, 58.) A ghost continues to be seen by a child, as long as the idea of there being a ghost lurks in his mind, but when the idea is given up, there is no longer any experience of a ghost." (III, 53, 31.)<sup>1</sup> So is the case with all our limitations. "The limit of your thought", so says Marden, "will be the limit of your possibilities." (Marden: *How to Get What You Want*, p. 45.)

Our mind is also the maker of our happiness or misery: on the condition of our mind depend all our joys and sorrows. Even bondage and freedom are the states of our mind and are wrought by our thought. No body else can make us happy or miserable, bound or liberated, but our own thought. "Everything, even bondage and freedom, depends on the mind. (III, 98, 3.) The increase or decrease of our sufferings is in the hands of our own mind. (III, 99, 43.) It is the creator of all our joys or sorrows. (III, 115, 24.) It is the

<sup>1</sup> यथा संवित्ता चित्तं सा तथाऽवस्थिति गता ।

परमेण प्रयत्नेन नीयतेऽन्यदशां पुनः ॥

अन्यत्ववेदनादन्यः परस्मादातिवाहिकः ।

ब्रह्मत्ववेदनाद्ब्रह्म सा संवित्तिर्हि नान्यजा ॥

यावदेतालसंकल्पो बालस्य किल विशते ।

निर्वेतालधियस्तावदुदयस्तस्य कः कथम् ॥

mind that is deluded, experiences birth or death, gets bound or feels released from the bondage." (IV, 4, 9.)<sup>1</sup>

Our environment and circumstances are the materialization of our own desire. Our objective world is but the projection of our own imagination, and the realization of our own desires. "The world-experience rises or falls in accordance with desires. (IV, 45, 33.) It is a long dream imagined by the mind. (IV, 45, 24.) Whatever desire is cherished by any one in his heart is ultimately realized in the world. (III, 96, 10.) By our own mind, through our own *samkalpa* (desire), with our own effort taking various forms, is this multifarious objective world spread out before us like a magic scene." (III, 96, 8-9.)<sup>2</sup>

Much stress is laid in the "New Thought" movement on the power of the mind to effect changes in the body and to cure physical ailments. The curative

<sup>1</sup> चित्तायत्तमिदं सर्वं जगत्स्थिरचरात्मकम् ।  
चित्ताधीनावतो राम बन्धमोक्षावपि स्फुटम् ॥  
मनःप्रमादाद्वर्धन्ते दुःखानि गिरिकूटवत् ।  
तद्वशादेव नश्यन्ति सूर्यस्याग्रे हिमं यथा ॥  
सर्वेषु सुखदुःखेषु सर्वासु कलनासु च ।  
मनः कर्तुं मनो भोक्तुं मानसं विद्धि मानवम् ॥  
मनो मोहमुपादत्ते म्रियते जायते मनः ।  
तत्त्वचिन्ताप्रसादेन बध्यते मुच्यते पुनः ॥

<sup>2</sup> इदं चित्तेच्छयोदेति लीयते तदनिच्छया ।  
दीर्घस्वप्नं तथैवेदं विद्धि चित्तोपपादितम् ॥  
या येन वासना यत्र लतेवारोपिता यथा ।  
सा तेन फलसूत्रत्र तदैव प्राप्यते तथा ।  
स्वेनैव चित्तरूपेण कर्मणा फलवर्णिना ।  
संकल्पैकशरीरेण नानाविस्तरशालिना ॥  
इदं ततमनेकात्म मायामयमकारणम् ॥



power of thought has been greatly demonstrated by the followers of the "Christian Science" and the Psychotheraputists even in cases of very serious illness. They have come to believe that the mind, through its power of thought, can bring about desirable changes in the body and can restore it to perfect health. Even a medical doctor has emphatically asserted: "*It is absolutely true that every thought we think has its corresponding effect on the whole or some part of human anatomy . . .*" Much has been said or written upon this subject, yet from my own observation as a physician I must say that I am astounded that it has not received a deeper consideration. Not a day passes that I do not see wonderful illustrations of this fact: *that the mind can both create and cure diseases.*" (Gilbert Davis: *The Philosophy of Life*, p. 65.) Marden also writes: "The body is but objectified thought, and . . . when the thought is changed the body also *must* change." (Marden: *How to Get What You Want*, p. 183). Vasiṣṭha holds exactly similar views. Body according to him is the creation of the mind and can be changed by it into any condition. Most of the diseases of the body originate in the disturbances of the mind, and can be cured by right thinking. "The body is created by the mind for its own use, as a silk-worm forms a cocoon round itself. (IV, 45, 7.) It creates the body from the material of its own thought. (IV, 11, 19.) The body changes in accordance with the thoughts in which the mind is engaged. (IV, 21, 16.) The body is now experienced as it has been eagerly imagined to be in the past." (VIa, 28, 34.)<sup>1</sup> According to Schopenhauer also

<sup>1</sup> मनसेदं शरीरं हि वासनार्थं प्रकल्पितम् ।

कृमिकोशप्रकारेण स्वात्मकोश इव स्वयम् ॥

"The whole body is nothing but objectified will." (Schopenhauer: *The World as Will and Idea*, I, 130.) According to Marden: "The body is but objectified thought, and . . . when the thought is changed the body also *must* change." (Marden: *How to get What You Want*, p. 18.) Larson also says: "That the mind exercises great power on the body, that every mental state is a cause, producing its corresponding effect upon the moral, the mental and the physical conditions of the individual, and that every thought is a force that can change, transform, or at least modify almost anything in the human system—these are facts that are no longer disputed. The metaphysical side of man is now receiving its due share of attention, and the facts just stated are therefore being firmly established among all who discern them." (C. D. Larson: *How to Stay Well*, p. 61.)

Vasiṣṭha distinguishes two kinds of diseases: physical and mental. "Mental and physical diseases are the two causes of pain. Relief from them is happiness (*sukha*). (VIa, 81, 12.) The disorder and inharmony of the physical body is called a physical disease (*vyadhi*) and the conflict of the mind is called a mental disease (*adhi*). Both of them have their (ultimate) root in ignorance, and can be finally cured by the knowledge of reality (*tattva-jñāna*)." (VIa, 81, 14.)<sup>1</sup>

करोति देहं संकल्पात्कुम्भकारो घटं यथा ॥  
 यन्मयं हि मनो राम देहस्तदनु तद्वशः ।  
 तत्तामायाति गन्धान्तः पवनो गन्धतामिव ॥  
 प्राक्प्रवाहविराम्यस्तो वासनातिशयेन यः ।  
 तथैव दृश्यते देहस्तथाऽऽकृत्युदयेन सः ॥

<sup>1</sup> आधयो व्याधयश्चैव द्वयं दुःखस्य कारणम् ।  
 तन्निवृत्तिः सुखं विद्यातत्त्वयो मोक्ष उच्यते ॥

How these diseases originate is further described by Vasiṣṭha as follows: "A depressing mental disturbance originates, when an individual foolishly worries about what has been achieved and what has not been achieved. (VIa, 81, 17.)<sup>1</sup> To realize the desires and ambitions that surge in their uncontrolled minds, ignorant people often do many improper things, such as eating unwholesome food, travelling in uncongenial countries, working at improper times, behaving in improper ways, associating with undesirable persons, contracting bad habits, etc., on account of which many disorders take place in their bodies, such as the clogging of the *nāḍis* or their weakness so as to make them unable to supply vital energy properly to all parts of the body. The vital energy (*prāṇa*) not being properly distributed (lit. flowing) in the body, inharmony results in the system, and there ensue physical diseases." (VIa, 81, 18-20.)<sup>2</sup>

Mental inharmony (*adhi*) is said by Vasiṣṭha to be the cause of physical diseases (*Vyādhayah*). He relates the two as the cause and the effect in this way: "The inharmony or disturbance (*vidhurata*) of the

देहदुःखं विदुष्याधिमाध्याख्यं वासनामयम् ।

मौर्ख्यमूले हि ते विद्यात्तत्त्वज्ञाने परिक्षयः ॥

<sup>1</sup> इदं प्राप्तमिदं नेति जाड्याद्वा घनमोहदाः ।

आधयः संप्रवर्तन्ते वर्षासु मिहिका इव ॥

<sup>2</sup> भृशं स्फुरन्तीष्विच्छासु मौर्ख्यं चेतस्यनिर्जिते ।

दुर्लभान्यवहारेण दुर्देशाक्रमणेन च ॥

दुष्कालव्यवहारेण दुष्क्रियास्फुरणेन च ।

दुर्जनासङ्गदोषेण दुर्भावोद्भावनेन च ॥

क्षीणत्वाद्वा प्रपूर्णत्वान्नाडीनां रन्ध्रसंततो ।

प्राणे विधुरतां याते काये तु विकलीकृते ॥

दौःस्थित्यकारणं दोषाद्व्याधिर्देहे प्रवर्तते ॥



body follows the inharmony of the mind. (VIa, 81, 30). When there is disturbance in the mind, the smooth and regular flow of the vital currents (*prāṇa*) is disturbed. The vital currents flowing improperly, the *nāḍis* become disorganized. Some of them, then, getting more vital energy than required, become stouter and others receiving less than required are atrophied. This causes sometimes bad digestion, sometimes indigestion and sometimes over-digestion. All that is eaten in such disordered condition produces only bad results. Sometimes the undigested food-particles are carried away by the vital currents to their own organs; sometimes the undigested matter settles down in the body. There it rots and consequently generates many diseases. In this way is mental inharmony the cause of our bodily diseases which can be cured only by removing the cause." (VIa, 81, 33-38.)<sup>1</sup> Compare the general idea of Vasistha with what Dr. Davis says: "Every disturbing, depressing thought that enters the brain has a depressing effect on every cell of the body and tends to produce disease. Fear, anger, jealousy, envy, hatred are all the fore-runners of disease and the messengers of death." (Davis: *The Philosophy*

<sup>1</sup> चित्ते विधुरिते देहः संक्षोभमनुयात्यलम् ॥

संक्षोभात्साम्यमुत्सृज्य वहन्ति प्राणवायवः ॥

असमं वहति प्राणे नाड्यो यान्ति विसंस्थितिम् ।

काश्चिन्नाड्यः प्रपूर्णत्वं यान्ति काश्चिच्च रिक्ताम् ॥

कुजीर्णत्वमजीर्णत्वमतिजीर्णत्वमेव वा ।

दोषायेव प्रयात्यन्नं प्राणसंचारदुष्कृतात् ॥

तथाऽन्नानि नयत्यन्तः प्राणवातः स्वमाश्रयम् ।

यान्यन्नानि निरोधेन तिष्ठन्त्यन्तः शरीरके ॥

तान्येव व्याधितां यान्ति परिणामस्वभावतः ।

एवमाद्येभेवेष्ट्याधिस्तस्याभावाच्च नश्यति ॥

of Life, p. 79.) . . . "Men, women and children are diseased and dying around us everywhere, as a result of pathological thought. Correct the thought of the world and disease will be swept away." (*Ibid*, p. 81). Trine similarly says: "We are rapidly finding to-day, and we shall find even more and more, as time passes, that practically all disease, with its consequent suffering, has its origin in perverted mental and emotional states and conditions." (Trine: *In Tune with the Infinite*, p. 55.) "Subtle and powerful are influences of the mind in the building and rebuilding of the body." (*Ibid.*, p. 69.)

The restoration of mental harmony, the disturbance of which is the source of bodily ailments, is, according to Vasiṣṭha, the proper cure of our physical diseases. (VIa, 81, 24.) How it can be done is stated as follows: "By performing noble actions and associating with people of good character, the mind becomes purified and calm, and consequently joy pervades the body. On account of the purity of the mind, the vital currents begin to flow properly and harmoniously and cleanse the system of all impurities, as a result of which the diseases are cured. (VIa, 81, 40-42.)<sup>1</sup> "Every hopeful idea", says Dr. Davis, "created in the mind, stimulates the heart, improves digestion and promotes the normal action of every gland." (*The Philosophy of Life*, p. 85.)

१ आधिक्षयेणाधिभवाः क्षीयन्ते व्याधयोऽप्यलम् ।

शुद्धया पुण्यया साधो क्रिया साधुसेवया ॥

मनः प्रयाति नैर्मल्यं निकषेणेव काञ्चनम् ।

आनन्दो वर्धते देहे शुद्धे चेतसि राधव ॥

सत्त्वशुद्धया वहन्त्येते क्रमेण प्राणवायवः ।

जरयन्ति तथाऽन्नानि व्याधिस्तेन विनश्यति ॥

Standing writes: "The therapeutic influence of the mind on the body is a recognized principle of modern medical science." (Herbert F. Standing: *Spirit in Evolution*, p. 127.)

Vasiṣṭha believes also in the cure by incantations (*mantras*). He says that "As medicines, *haritakī*, etc., produce purgative effect on the body by their very nature, so also can letters, *ya, ra, la, va*, etc., be made to produce certain effects through our faith." (VIa, 81, 39.)<sup>1</sup> So, it is our faith that gives power to the letters of an incantation to produce curative effect on our bodies. It is also believed by the leaders of the "New Thought" now-a-days, that "Faith, hope, expectancy and belief are the most powerful therapeutic agents." (*The Philosophy of Life*, p. 89.) "Faith is at the bottom of all cures" says Marden (*How to Get What You Want*.)

So far we have learnt that, according to Vasiṣṭha, physical diseases originate in mental inharmony. But mental inharmony is itself due to ignorance of the true Nature of the Self, of objects, and of their true relation. If we could know everything rightly, we would never feel disturbed in our minds and so would be saved from physical troubles as well. The real disease and the essence (*sāra*) of all kinds of diseases, according to him, is Ignorance, on account of which we undergo various troubles associated with our very birth in this world. So he says. "Sufferings are of two kinds: the ordinary ones, which we usually know, and the ultimate one which consists in the very birth in the world."

<sup>1</sup> यथा विरेकं कुर्वन्ति हरीतक्यः स्वभावतः ।

भावनावशतः कार्यं तथा यत्नवादयः ॥



(VIa, 81, 23.)<sup>1</sup> How then are we to cure the ultimate suffering? An answer has already been given at the commencement of Vasiṣṭha's teachings. The ultimate cure of the ultimate suffering is Self-knowledge. "The ordinary sufferings are removed by our having what is wanted. But the ultimate suffering cannot be cured by anything short of Self-knowledge. (VIa, 81, 24-25.) This remedy of the essence of all kinds of mental and physical sufferings uproots all of them, as a river does the creepers grown on its banks, in the rainy season." (IVa, 81, 25-26.)<sup>2</sup>

Not only can we be free from the round of births and deaths through right vision of the Self, as suggested above, we can also make our life happy here, by right thinking and right living, if we only know the power that thought wields. We can live a healthy and harmonious life on earth, if we have mastery over thought. For, if we determine to remain above sickness and suffering and do not allow ourselves to be weak-minded, if we cherish only right thoughts and emotions, if we never allow the balance of mind to be overthrown by ambitions, cares, anxieties, worries, etc., there is no reason why disease should ever lodge in the temple of our body. The secret of a long and healthy life lies in right thinking. This is what we learn from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*: "Whatever is resolved by the mind to be experienced,

<sup>1</sup> द्विविधो व्याधिरस्तीह सामान्यः सार एव च ।

व्यवहारस्तु सामान्यः सारो जन्ममयः स्मृतः ॥

<sup>2</sup> प्राप्तेनाभिमतेनैव नश्यन्ति व्यावहारिकाः ।

आत्मज्ञानं विना सारो नाधिर्नश्यति राखव ॥

आधिव्याधिविच्छासानां राम साराधिसंक्षयः ।

सर्वेषां मूलहा प्रावृण्णदीव तटवीरुवाम् ॥

cannot be undone by any other agency. (III, 88, 18.) He who is resolute and undeterred from making effort, is beyond all sufferings. (III, 92, 14.) The resolute and determined wise man is beyond the attack of worries, diseases, curses and the evil looks of others." (III, 92, 24-25.)<sup>1</sup> According to Vasiṣṭha, that man can live a healthy life (*anāmaya-jīvitam*), who lives ever satisfied within himself and is always above the cares of having or not having the objects of his desire (VIa, 26, 10); who never indulges in the thought "this I have attained today, that I will do tomorrow" (VIa, 26, 12); whose mind is tranquil, free from worries, centred in the Self, controlled and at peace (VIa, 26, 16); who is not troubled by the idea of acquiring or having acquired worldly things (VIa, 26, 18); who is not joyous at being happily situated or even crowned, nor is afraid of old age, death or misery (VIa, 26, 19); who does not make the distinction of friend and foe among the people around him (VIa, 26, 20); who is master of his strength, and behaves equally, nobly and sweetly with all (VIa, 26, 25); whose mind is not soiled by the thought of being an agent of any action, in spite of his being busily engaged in it (VIa, 26, 27); who does not injure anybody in spite of his having the power to do so; who is not cast down even in serious troubles; who does not desire anything in spite of being poor (VIa,

<sup>1</sup> न मनोनिश्चयकृतं कश्चिद्रोधयितुं क्षमः ॥

पौरुषं स्वमवष्टभ्य वैर्यमालम्ब्य शाश्वतम् ।

यदि तिष्ठत्यगम्योऽसौ दुःखानां तदनिन्दितः ॥

अन्येऽपि सावधाना ये धीराः सुरमहर्षवः ।

चित्तात्स्वमनुसंधानं न त्यजन्ति मनागपि ॥

आघयो व्याधयश्चैव शापाः पापदशस्तथा ।

न खण्डयन्ति तच्चित्तं पद्माघाताः शिलामिव ॥

26, 29); who ever finds something new and good in what decays, wears or perishes (VIa, 26, 33); who is a sweet friend to all, and shares their joys and sufferings (VIa, 26, 34); who is courageous in misfortunes, a benefactor of all in prosperity and unmindful of life or death. (VIa, 26, 35.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what O. S. Marden says: "Mind is the only creator. Nothing ever was

<sup>1</sup> भावाभावमयीं चिन्तामीहितानीहितान्विताम् ।  
 विमृश्यात्मनि तिष्ठामि चिरं जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्यामि सुन्दरम् ।  
 इति चिन्ता न मे तेन चिरं जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 प्रशान्तचापलं वीतशोकं स्वस्थं समाहितम् ।  
 मनो मम मुने शान्तं तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 किमद्य मम संपन्नं प्रातर्वा भविता पुनः ।  
 इति चिन्तान्वरो नास्ति तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 जरामरणदुःखेषु राज्यलाभमुखेषु च ॥  
 न विभेमि न हृष्यामि तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 अयं बन्धुः परधायं ममायमयमन्यतः ।  
 इति ब्रह्मन् जानामि तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 अपरीचलया शक्त्या सुदृशा क्षिब्धमुग्धया ।  
 ऋजु पश्यामि सर्वत्र तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 यत्करोमि यदश्रामि तत्पक्त्वा तद्वतोऽपि मे ।  
 मनो नैष्कर्म्यमादत्ते तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 करोमीशोऽपि नाक्रान्तिं परितापे न खेदवान् ।  
 दरिद्रोऽपि न वाञ्छामि तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 जीर्णं भिन्नं क्लृप्तं क्षीणं क्षुब्धं क्षुण्णं क्षयं गतम् ।  
 पश्यामि नववत्सर्वं तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 सुखितोऽस्मि सुखापन्ने दुःखितो दुःखिते जने ।  
 सर्वस्य प्रियमित्रं च तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥  
 आपद्यचलधीरोऽस्मि जगन्मित्रं च संपदि ।  
 भावाभावेषु नैवास्मि तेन जीवाम्यनामयः ॥



or ever will be created or recreated except through mind." (O. S. Marden: *The Miracle of Right Thought*, p. 227.) "Physical discord always means mental discord, for if there had always been perfect harmony in the mind, the body would be in harmony. So, if you can keep them in perfect harmony, the body must ultimately correspond, because the physical is merely an outpicturing of the mental." (*Ibid.*, p. 174.) "Every discordant thought, feeling or emotion must pay the penalty in the physical manifestation of some discord." (*Ibid.*, p. 181.) "The body, being a product of mind, must necessarily be like it . . . A healthy body is composed of healthy thought externalized, outpictured." (*Ibid.*, p. 183.) "It is now well established that vicious mental states, violent emotions and explosive passions, make chemical changes in the brain and poison the cell life through the whole body." (*Ibid.*, p. 184.) "Mind is the great healer, the great restorer, because it was the original creator of these cells." (*Ibid.*, p. 186.) "Whatever improves the health of the mind improves the health of the body." (*Ibid.*, p. 193.) "It is well-known that worry, anxiety, fear kill millions and millions of red blood corpuscles every day." (*Ibid.*, p. 194.) The physical is merely the outpicturing, the expression of the mental condition. The condition of our health is our objectified thought." (*Ibid.*, p. 196.)

It is not only the secret of health that lies in right thinking or the proper culture of the mind, as we have learnt above, but also of a happy and joyful life. Happiness is another name for the harmony of the mind. When our thoughts do not wander to this or that object and we feel Self-satisfied, we are in a state of joy which is unique. If we are thus happy within, everything appears good and pleasing to us. "The Mind

is all in all. That being cured all troubles are cured. (IV, 4, 5.) If there is peace within, the whole world looks cool and pleasing (V, 56, 34), but when cravings and desires surge within, the world appears as something intensely burning us like fire. (IV, 4, 5.) The result that accrues from the culture of the mind cannot follow even from the prosperity of all the three worlds or from the possession of jewels of all kinds. (V, 21, 12.) When one's mind is perfected, the whole world appears to him to be full of nectar, just as to a man putting on a pair of shoes the whole earth appears, as it were, covered with leather." (V, 21, 14.)<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hutchison, has therefore, rightly said: "The necessity of opening our eyes wide to the far reaching influence of our thoughts in causing health or disease, happiness or unhappiness, cannot be too strongly urged." (Hutchison: *Hypnotism and Self-education*, p. 85.) James Allen similarly says: "Your own thoughts, desires and aspirations comprise your world, and, to you, all that there is in the universe of beauty, and joy, and bliss, or of ugliness, and sorrow, and pain, is contained within yourself. By your own thoughts you make or mar your life, your world, your universe. As you build within by the

<sup>1</sup> मनः सर्वमिदं राम तस्मिन्नन्तश्चिकित्सते ।

चिकित्सितो वै सकलो जगज्जालमयो भवेत् ॥

अन्तःशीतलतायां तु लब्धायां शीतलं जगत् ।

अन्तस्तृष्णोपतप्तानां दावदाहमयं जगत् ॥

न तत्त्रिभुवनैश्वर्यान्त्र कोशाद्ब्रह्मधारिणः ।

फलमासाद्यते चित्ताद्यन्महत्त्वोपबृंहितात् ॥

पूर्णं मनसि संपूर्णं जगत्सर्वं सुधाद्रवैः ।

उपानद्गुदपादस्य ननु चर्मास्तृतैव भूः ॥



power of thought, so will your outward life and circumstances shape themselves accordingly. Whatsoever you harbour in the inmost chamber of your heart will, sooner or later, by the inevitable law of reaction, shape itself in your outward life." (James Allen: *Book of Meditations*, p. 34.) "When the heart is pure all outward things are pure." (*Ibid.*, p. 63.) "Man is the doer of his own deeds, as such he is the maker of his own character . . . Character is destiny." (*Ibid.*, p. 66.) "Man is a thought-being, and his life and character are determined by thoughts in which he habitually dwells." (*Ibid.*, p. 286.)

A purified mind is also needed for having the intuition of the inner Self, for the Self can shine only in a pure and calm mind, and not in an impure one which is laden with the dust of desires and passions. "As the sky, although present everywhere, is reflected only on a mirror, so the Self (Pure Consciousness), although omnipresent—present even in a wall, in the sky or in a piece of stone (*i.e.*, in every object whatsoever)—is reflected (felt) only within a calm mind." (V, 71, 39, 36.)<sup>1</sup>

It has also to be remembered that we cannot anyhow get rid of the experience of the objective world and of the ignorance of the Self, as long as our mind continues to be impure, for it will, in that case, continue to imagine one state of existence after another. The experience of an objective world and the possession of an impure mind exist, grow and decay *pari pasu*,

<sup>1</sup> सर्वत्र स्थितमाकाशमादर्शे प्रतिबिम्बति ।

यथा तथाऽऽत्मा सर्वत्र स्थितश्चेतसि दृश्यते ॥

आकाशोपलकुब्ज्यादौ सर्वत्रात्मदशा स्थिता ।

प्रतिबिम्बमिवादर्शे चित्त एवात्र दृश्यते ॥



according to Vasiṣṭha. "The darkness of the world (dark, because, its experience conceals the knowledge of the Self from us) continues to be experienced, and cannot be removed even by fire, the moon and the twelve suns, all burning together as long as they may, so long as the mind is ignorant and merged in the quagmire of worldly pleasures." (V, 5, 27-28.)<sup>1</sup>

We have thus seen what wonderful power our mind has both for good and evil, according to Vasiṣṭha. There is no wonder, therefore, that he has called the mind the nave of the wheel of the whole world, which can be controlled in all its aspects by having brought the mind (which is another name for thought, will and desire) under control. "The Mind is the nave of this wonderful wheel of the world, which deludes us by its movements. (V, 50, 6.) When, with intelligence and effort, it (the mind) is stopped from moving (*i.e.*, from desiring, willing, thinking, imagining, etc.), the wheel of the world is stopped." (V, 50, 6.)<sup>2</sup> It might also be very well compared to Shelley's "dome of many coloured glass, (which) stains the white radiance of Eternity". Kant's conception of the mind would approach that of Vasiṣṭha to some extent, only if Kant would give up the idea of the objective "things-in-themselves",

<sup>1</sup> जडधर्मि मनो यावद्भर्तृकच्छपवत्स्थितम् ।  
भोगमार्गवदामूढं विस्मृतात्मविचारणम् ॥  
तावत्संसारतिमिरं सेन्दुनाऽपि सवद्दिना ।  
अर्कद्वादशकेनापि मनागपि न भिद्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> अस्य संसाररूपस्य मायाचक्रस्य राधव ।  
चित्तं विद्धि महानामि भ्रमतो भ्रमदायिनः ॥  
तस्मिन्द्रुतमवच्छब्दे विद्या पुरुषयज्ञतः ।  
गृहीतनाभिवहन्मायाचक्रं निरुध्यते ॥

for according to Vasiṣṭha, as we have already seen, there remains nothing in an object, when the mind has withdrawn what all it projected out of itself. We must not however forget that the mind itself is a centre of thought-activity in the infinite "Ether of Consciousness", from which the bubbles of the objective world are blown out all around but within the same Consciousness, which really is the "Thing-in-Itself".

## CHAPTER VI

### ATTAINMENT OF EXTRAORDINARY POWERS (SIDDHIS)

THE Philosophy hitherto dealt with was not given by Vasiṣṭha as a mere visionary dream, the creation of a poet's fancy, a gratuitous hypothesis with no warrant for experimentation, a mere surmise as to what may be, or a mere speculative doctrine. It is not a circle imagined by a philosopher, when only a little arc of it is discovered in experience, as most of the philosophical systems of the world seem to be. It is claimed, on the other hand, that almost every aspect of this philosophy was experimented upon and actually realized in experience.\* Every doctrine is the outcome of *sādhana*, i.e., the realization of its truth in experience. There lived people in ancient India, it seems, who could demonstrate in practice what is here given in theory, otherwise all talk of it would be futile and all the labour of writing a book like the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha* lost. Much of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha would remain mysterious and unintelligible until the practical aspect of the philosophy—which was really the more important one in ancient times—is again revived. No man, to give an example, could have a shadow of belief a century ago in what, to a scientist of the fourth decade of the twentieth century, is a matter of course. That the music going on in Calcutta or Bombay is at the same time being heard at Benares is still unbelievable news to the



millions of our countrymen. The wonders that modern science is revealing and demonstrating with regard to the external world of matter are not more surprising and astounding than those which the ancient Indian *Yoga* discovered and demonstrated with regard to the inner world of the mind. The possibility of supernormal phenomena, such as telepathy, telæsthesia, telekinesis, precognition, hyperpromethia, hyperæsthesia, clairvoyance, clair-audience, disintegration of personality, hyperboulia, levitation, metastasis, polyzoism, psychorrhagy, psycho-therapeucy, telergy, etc., go a great deal to remove from the mind of a modern man the prejudice that all talk of the ancient Indian writers on the attainment of extraordinary powers (*siddhis*), not normally possessed by all, is imaginary and without foundation in experience. Here we propose to describe what Vasiṣṭha has said with regard to the secret of attaining some of the supernormal powers and of experiencing the existence of things which ever remain unknown to the ordinary man, although much of it will remain unintelligible mystery, unless actually experimented upon with the help of an expert, who, unfortunately, is a rarity in this age. (Cf. the *Bhāgavata* XI, 15.)

According to Patañjali, the author of the *Yoga-sūtras*, the secret of all supernormal powers is *Samyama* which consists in *Dhāraṇa* (concentration), *Dhyāna* (meditation) and *Samādhi* (intense contemplation); whereas according to another school of *Yoga*, generally called *Hatha Yoga*, the secret of attaining all kinds of supernormal powers lies in arousing the *Kuṇḍalini* Power through the control of *Prāṇa*, which lies dormant in every normal individual. The former may be termed a psychological method and the latter more or less a physical one. In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* we find both

of these methods described, although a preference is given to the former. It is, however, curious that in his treatment of the psychological method of attaining supernormal powers, Vasiṣṭha does not make use of the terms of Patañjali, e.g., the term *Samyama* is conspicuous by its absence. It is really worthy of note that this psychological process is very akin to what at the present time is called Auto-suggestion, Affirmation, Self-hypnosis, etc. The main thing in this method is "affirmation" with the full conviction of our deeper and spiritual nature (which is not usually taken note of by an ordinary individual), on the one hand, and forgetfulness, i.e., rising above, or withdrawing from, the feeling of limitation and imperfection, on the other. It is the realization of what we really are and the denial of what we at present feel ourselves to be. The essential condition to effect this is the purity or refinement of the mind which consists, according to Vasiṣṭha, in freedom from desires and passions and from the tendency to enjoy gross pleasures. We shall deal with the psychological method first.

Usually, the knowledge of what is passing in others' minds is denied to us. Vasiṣṭha thinks that it is possible to know what is passing in other minds. The main hindrance to such knowledge is grossness or impurity of the mind. When our mind is pure, it can reflect what is passing in other minds. "A mind is powerless to be in contact with other minds, as long as it is impure. It can be in contact with other minds, when it is purified. (IV, 17, 29-30.) Purity of the mind consists in freedom from desires and in the realization of the identity with Consciousness." (IV, 17, 31.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> मलिनं हि मनोऽवीर्यं न मिथः श्रेयमर्हति ।

चित्ततत्त्वानि शुद्धानि संमिलन्ति परस्परम् ॥



As already pointed out, the universe is full of numberless worlds in which individuals of various grades of spirituality live. Many of the worlds exist interpenetrating our world, yet they and the individuals living in them are not seen by us. In some of these worlds live the *Siddhas* or the enlightened ones. They and their worlds are not seen by us, because our minds are not sufficiently subtle. Vasiṣṭha thinks that by the purification of our minds we can see the subtler worlds and can meet the enlightened ones. Here is what he says: "The worlds of the *Siddhas*, which are attained by good deeds, cannot be approached by the unenlightened with their present bodies, as light cannot be approached by darkness. (III, 53, 29.) They can be entered only with the *punya-deha* (purified body) (cf. *dharma-kāya* of the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhism) or the spiritual body as purified by knowledge and discrimination. (III, 53, 34.) Only those who are the knowers of what ought to be known or those who lead a life of virtue can enter the subtle worlds, and no others. (III, 54, 1.) Only those whose mind has become enlightened and subtle can meet the enlightened ones (*Siddhas*) born in other subtler worlds, after their death here. (III, 22, 10.) You will perceive the subtler worlds, only when, through the negation of desire, you attain a lasting state of subtlety." (III, 22, 12.)<sup>1</sup>

शुद्धिर्हि चित्तस्य विवासनत्वमभूतसर्वेदनमेकरूपम् ।

तस्याशु शुद्धया भवति प्रबुद्धस्तन्मात्रयुक्त्या परसङ्गमेति ॥

<sup>1</sup> अप्रबुद्धवियः सिद्धलोकान्पुण्यवशोदितान् ।

न समर्थाः स्वदेहेन प्राप्तुं छाया इवातपान् ॥

अतो ज्ञानविवेकेन पुण्येनाय वरेण च ।

पुण्यदेहेन गच्छन्ति परं लोकमनेन तु ॥



Our identification with the physical body and the limitation of our consciousness to physicality is the cause of our powerlessness, as, by limiting ourselves to the body, we forget our deeper nature, which is omnipotent and omniscient. "One, who is under the control of the illusory idea that he is the physical body, is unable to pass through the subtle and minute passage. (III, 40, 8.) How can he believe in being able to do anything great, who is merged in the idea that he is the physical body made of earth, etc., and that he is unable to fly in the sky? (III, 53, 33.) When it is impossible for us to enter the world of our own imagination along with the physical body, how can we enter the world of other people's *samkalpa* (imagination) with the physical body?" (III, 21, 43.)<sup>1</sup>

The main thing required for attaining higher powers is, therefore, to deny one's identity with the physical body, which is another name for limitation, imperfection and incapacity of effecting greater things, and to affirm

तस्माद्ये वेद्यवेत्तारो ये वा धर्मं परं श्रिताः ।  
 आतिवाहिकलोकांस्ते प्राप्नुवन्तीह नेतरे ॥  
 आतिवाहिकतां यातं बुद्धं चित्तान्तरैर्मनः ।  
 सर्गजन्मान्तरगतैः सिद्धैर्मिलति नेतरत् ॥  
 आतिवाहिकताज्ञानं स्थितिमेव्यति शाश्वतीम् ।  
 यदा तदा ह्यसंकल्पल्लोकान्द्रक्ष्यसि पावनान् ॥

<sup>1</sup> आधिभौतिकदेहोऽहमिति यस्य मतिभ्रमः ।  
 तस्यासावशुरन्ध्रेण गन्तुं शक्नोति नानघ ॥  
 अहं पृथ्व्यादिदेहः खे गतिर्नास्ति ममोत्तमा ।  
 इति निश्चयवान्योऽन्तः कथं स्यात्सोऽन्यनिश्चयः ॥  
 यत्र स्वसंकल्पपुरं स्वदेहेन न लभ्यते ।  
 तत्रान्यसंकल्पपुरं देहोऽन्यो लभते कथम् ॥

one's being spiritual in nature and therefore full of higher capacities. Having mentally detached one's self from the body, one should feel that one is the subtle mind which is free from all limitations of the gross body. How to effect that, is suggested in the following passages: "The mind is in reality subtle, but it has become the physical body through constant and repeated thought of physicality. This thought ceasing to function, it attains its original state of subtlety. (III, 57, 30.) As in a dream, if a dreamer comes to acquire the idea that the hardness and heaviness (physicality) of the dream personality is only an illusion, the idea of its being subtle is reinstated, so also, by the knowledge of our personality being essentially subtle and light, the heaviness and hardness (physicality), that we have wrongly assumed to be its, will drop away and we shall again feel that we are minds (and not the body.) (III, 57, 31-33.) For him the idea of being the physical body ceases to operate whose mind is fully fixed on the idea of being subtle. (III, 58, 14.) As snow melts in water through heat, so the mind becomes subtle through the thinness of desire for worldly objects, and through practice in right vision takes resort to purity. (III, 22, 9 and 17.) The illusion of the individual feeling himself to be a body, comes to an end, when the light of knowledge dawns. When all *samkalpa* has come to an end, the physical body is not experienced, as the light of a lamp ceases, when its oil is exhausted." (VIa, 82, 17-19.)<sup>1</sup>

१ तस्यैवाभ्यासतोऽप्येति साधिभौतिकतामिति ।

यदा शाम्यति सैवास्य तदा पूर्वां प्रवर्तते ॥

तदा गुरुत्वं काठिन्यमिति यश्च मुधा ग्रहः ।

शाम्येत्स्वप्नरस्येव बोधुर्बोधानिरामयात् ॥

The whole secret of attaining anything and everything is expressed by Vasiṣṭha in one word *Bhavana*, which it is very difficult to translate by a single word in English. *Bhavana* is creative affirmation of something with full faith. It brings into existence or experience something which is not already there. It is the transformation of the idea into a reality by force of imagination. "Whatever is intensely affirmed (*bhavyate*) is experienced." (VIa, 82, 26.)<sup>1</sup>

The other method is the bio-physical method of the control of the vital currents (*prāṇas*) and the arousal of

लघुतूलसमापत्तिस्ततः समुपजायते ।  
 स्वप्ने स्वप्नपरिज्ञानादिव देहस्य योगिनः ॥  
 स्वप्ने स्वप्नपरिज्ञानाद्यथा देहो लघुर्भवेत् ।  
 तथा बोधादयं देहः स्थूलवत्प्लुतिमान्भवेत् ॥  
 रूढातिवाहिकदृशः प्रशाम्यत्याधिभौतिकः ।  
 बुधस्य दृश्यमानोऽपि शरन्मेव इवाम्बरे ॥  
 शुद्धसत्त्वानुपत्तितं चेतः प्रतनुवासनम् ।  
 आतिवाहिकतामेति हिमं तापादिवाम्बुताम् ॥  
 अवबोधवचनाभ्यासाद्देहस्यास्यैव जायते ।  
 संसारवासनाकार्षेयं नूनं चित्तशरीरता ॥  
 असत्यमेव संकल्पभ्रमेणेदं शरीरकम् ।  
 जीवः पश्यति मूढात्मा बालो यक्षमिवोद्धतम् ॥  
 यदा तु ज्ञानदीपेन सम्यगालोक आगतः ।  
 संकल्पमोहो जीवस्य क्षीयते शरदभ्रवत् ॥  
 शान्तिमायाति देहोऽयं सर्वसंकल्पसंक्षपात् ।  
 तदा रात्रव निःशेषं दीपस्तैलक्षये यथा ॥

<sup>1</sup> एवं यथा यदेवेह भाव्यते दृढभावनात् ।

भूयते हि तदेवाशु तदित्यालोकितं मुहुः ॥



the *Kuṇḍalinī* Power. What the *Kuṇḍalinī* is, is described in the following words: "There is in the midst of the hundred *nāḍīs*, (situated in the lower abdomen) one *nāḍī* (nerve) called the *Antar-veṣṭanikā*. It is circular like the frontal circular part of a *vinā*; like an eddy of water; like a vortex; and like a half of the syllable *Om* (ॐ written in the Deva-nāgarī script). It is present in the body of all creatures, gods, demons, men, beasts, fishes, birds, insects, etc. It exists in a coiled form resembling the body of a serpent shivering with cold. It is in perpetual throbbing. It is exceedingly delicate within, like the pulp of a plantain. Within this *nāḍī* resides the *Parā Śakti* (the greatest Force or Power) which is called the *Kuṇḍalinī* on account of its circular movements. It is the Ultimate or the greatest power of all living creatures and is the source of the various kinds of their capacities. Like an infuriated cobra it always throbs (as it were), with a hissing sound. Its mouth (i.e., of the *nāḍī*) opens upwards. (VIa, 80, 36-43.) All the *nāḍīs* (nerves) of the *hṛdaya* (heart) are connected with the *Kuṇḍalinī*. They originate from it and return back to it, like rivers unto an ocean." (VIa, 80, 47.) This *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* residing in the *Kuṇḍalinī nāḍī*, which, in fact, is a ray of Consciousness, is called by various names in accordance with its different functions. "It is called *kālā* on account of its activity (*kalana*); *cit* on account of its awareness. (VIa, 81, 2.) It is *Jīva* when it manifests as life, mind (*manas*) when it thinks, and imagination (*saṃkalpa*) on account of imagining (*saṃkalpana*), and *buddhi* (intellect) when it knows. (VIa, 80, 3.) It becomes the subtle body when it is egoized (individualized.) (VIa, 80, 4.) Having become the *apāna* (a vital current) it flows downwards; as *udāna* it flows upwards, and in the form of *samāna* it exists in the middle

portion of the body." (VIa, 81, 5.)<sup>1</sup> This description of *Kuṇḍalinī* is very much coloured by the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha. As modern science places the seat of the mind in the brain of the physical body, so it seems

परिमण्डलिताकारा मर्मस्थानं समाश्रिता ।  
 अन्तर्वैद्यनिका नाम नाडी नाडीशताश्रिता ॥  
 वीणाप्रावर्तसदृशी सलिलावर्तसंनिभा ।  
 लिप्याऽवौकारसंस्थाना कुण्डलावर्तसंस्थिता ॥  
 देवासुरमनुष्येषु मृगनक्रवगादिषु ।  
 कीटादिष्वञ्जान्तेषु सर्वेषु प्राणिषूदिता ॥  
 शीतार्तमुत्तमोगीन्द्रभोगवद्ब्रह्मण्डला ।  
 सिता कल्पाम्निविगलदिन्दुवद्ब्रह्मकुण्डली ॥  
 ऊरोर्भूमध्यरन्ध्राणि स्पृशन्ती वृत्तिचञ्चला ।  
 अनारतं च सस्पन्दा पवमानेन तिष्ठति ॥  
 तस्यास्त्वभ्यन्तरे तस्मिन्कदलीकोशकोमले ।  
 या परा शक्तिः स्फुरति वीणावेगलसद्गतिः ॥  
 सा चोक्ता कुण्डली नाम्ना कुण्डलाकारवाहिनी ।  
 प्राणिनां परमा शक्तिः सर्वशक्तिजवप्रदा ॥  
 अनिशं निःश्वसद्रूपा रुषितेव मुजङ्गमी ।  
 संस्थितोर्ध्वीकृतमुखी स्पन्दनाहेतुतां गता ॥  
 तस्यां समस्ताः संवद्धा नाड्यो हृदयकोशगाः ।  
 उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते महार्णव इवापगाः ॥  
 साऽन्तः कुण्डलिनी स्पन्दस्पर्शसंवित्कलाऽमला ।  
 कलोक्ता कलनेनाशु कथिता चेतनेन चित् ॥  
 जीवनाजीवतां याता मननाच्च मनःस्थिता ।  
 संकल्पाच्चैव संकल्पा बोधाद् बुद्धिरिति स्मृता ॥  
 अहंकारात्मतां याता सैषा पुर्यष्टकाभिधा ।  
 स्थिता कुण्डलिनी देहे जीवशक्तिरनुत्तमा ॥  
 अपानतामुपागत्य सततं प्रवहत्यधः ।  
 समाना नाभिमध्यस्था उदानाख्योपरि स्थिता ॥

that, according to Vasiṣṭha the *Antar-veṣṭanikā* centre of the *nāḍis* (nerves?) of the body situated in the abdomen is the seat of the Energy of the individual. In the above description, it may be noted, there is confusion between the Power and the *nāḍi* in which the power resides, for both are very often called by the same name *Kuṇḍalinī*, in the same way as the brain and the mind are very often confused in popular language.

This Power is aroused to full consciousness with the help of the currents of *Prāṇa*. The mechanism of *Prāṇa* is described in the following passages:

"There is a very tender organ made of (soft) bone and flesh, having three pairs of lobes in it (lit. lotuses). It touches the two canals of the body one of which goes downwards and the other upwards. (VIa, 24, 21.) By the inflow of air in it from outside the body, its lobes are inflated and set into movements. (VIa, 24, 22.) As the moving leaves of a tree increase the movement of the air outside, so also the to-and-fro-movements of the lobes (lit. leaves of the lotus which is the organ) of this organ increase the volume of the air within the body. (VIa, 24, 23.) The air expanded thus by the movements of the organ, then, enters and pervades the *nāḍis* of the body which spread throughout the body. (VIa, 24, 24.) This air of the *Hṛdaya* (name of the organ) proceeding to other parts of the body is called by various names by those who know them, such as the *Prāṇa*, the *Samāna*, the *Apāna*, etc. (VIa, 24, 25.) As beams spread all around from the disc of the moon, so all the vital currents of *Prāṇa* (the vital energy) spread all around in the body from this organ of the three pairs of lobes. (VIa, 24, 26.) They proceed from it and return to it, are collected in



it and sent out of it, rise from and fall into it. (Vla, 24, 27.) The (general) name given to the air in the *hrdaya* is *Prāṇa*. Some current of it moves the eyes, some again invests the skin with the tactile sense, some goes to the nose, some digests food, some flows to the organ of speech. In short *Prāṇa* sets the whole body in activity as a mechanic does his machine. (Vla, 24, 28-30.) Amongst the currents of the *Prāṇa*, two are the principal ones. The main current flowing upwards is called *prāṇa* (in a restricted sense) and that flowing downwards is named *apāṇa*. (Vla, 24, 31.) The course of their flow is subtler than even a thousandth part of the fibre of a stalk of lotus and very difficult to be known." (Vla, 24, 37.)<sup>1</sup>

पद्मयुग्मत्रयं यन्त्रमस्थिमांसमयं मृदु ।  
 ऊर्ध्वाधोनालमन्योन्यमिलत्कोमलसङ्गम् ॥  
 सेकेन विकसत्पत्रं सकलाकाशचारिणा ।  
 चलन्ति तस्य पत्राणि मृदु व्याप्तानि वायुना ॥  
 चलत्सु तेषु पत्रेषु स मरुत्परिवर्धते ।  
 वाताहते लतापत्रजाले बहिरिवाभितः ॥  
 शृङ्गि नीतः स नाडीषु कृत्वा स्थानमनेकधा ।  
 ऊर्ध्वाधोवर्तमानासु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रसरत्यथ ॥  
 प्राणापानसमानाद्यैस्ततः स हृदयानिलः ।  
 संकेतैः प्रोच्यते तज्ज्ञैर्विचित्राचारचोष्ठैः ॥  
 हृत्पद्मयन्त्रत्रितये समस्ताः प्राणशक्तयः ।  
 ऊर्ध्वाधः प्रसृता देहे चन्द्रबिम्बादिवांशवः ॥  
 यान्त्यायान्ति विकर्षन्ति हरन्ति विहरन्ति च ।  
 उत्पतन्ति पतन्त्याशु ता एताः प्राणशक्तयः ॥  
 स एष हृत्पद्मगतः प्राण इत्युच्यते बुधैः ।  
 अस्य काचिन्मुने शक्तिः प्रस्पन्दयति लोचने ॥  
 काचित्स्पर्शमुपादत्ते काचिद्ब्रह्मति नासया ।  
 काचिदन्नं ज्वरयति काचिद्भक्ति वचांसि च ॥

In order to acquire extraordinary and supernormal powers one has to master the flow of the currents of the Vital Energy (the *Prāṇa*), so that he may be able to withdraw it from a particular place or direction and to send it out to another where it is required. No definite course of practice in detail has been described by Vasiṣṭha for gaining such mastery over the currents of the *Prāṇa*, probably because it may not be of much use and may be of positive harm without an expert guide. We find only the following general instruction: "The *Prāṇa* can be mastered by giving up all other desires lurking in the heart; by the practices beginning with the contraction of the orifices of the body; by good actions; by associating with the wise; by giving up all worldly objects; by taking to proper postures of the body; by the purity of food and character (VIa, 80, 31-32); by freeing oneself gradually from passions, such as anger and avarice; and by renouncing all the pleasures of the world." (VIa, 80, 33.)<sup>1</sup>

बहुनाऽत्र किमुक्तेन सर्वमेव शरीरेके ।  
करोति भगवान्वायुर्यन्त्रेहामिव यान्तिकः ॥  
तत्रोर्ध्वाधो द्विसंकेतौ प्रसृतावनिलौ मुने ।  
प्राणापानाविति ख्यातौ प्रकटौ द्वौ वरानिलौ ॥  
सहस्रविनिकृताङ्गाद्विसतन्तुलवादपि ।  
दुर्लभ्या विद्यमानाऽपि गतिः सूक्ष्मतराऽनयोः ॥

<sup>1</sup> अन्तःस्था ह्यखिलास्त्यक्त्वा साध्यार्थेतरवासनाः ।

गुदादिद्वारसंकोचात्स्थानकादिक्रियाक्रमैः ॥  
भोजनासनशुद्ध्या च साधुशास्त्रार्थभावेनात् ।  
स्वाचारात्सुजनासङ्गात्सर्वत्यागात्सुखासनात् ॥  
प्राणायामधनाभ्यासाद्राम कालेन केनचित् ।  
कोपलोभादिसंत्यागाद्भोगत्यागाच्च सुव्रत ॥

Complete control over the *Prāṇa* is a great achievement according to Vasiṣṭha. It enables one to get whatever one wants. "All prosperity, from acquiring a kingdom to being finally liberated, can be attained through the mastery of the *Prāṇa*." (VIa, 80, 35.)<sup>1</sup>

How extraordinary powers can be attained through the application or direction of the force of the *Prāṇa* to the *Kuṇḍalinī* is described in the following passages:

"If by the practice of *pūraka* (filling up) one can succeed in filling the *Kuṇḍalinī nāḍī* with *Prāṇa* and letting it remain there without any outflow, one's body will become as heavy as a mountain in addition to becoming stout." (VIa, 81, 45.)<sup>2</sup> This attainment is called *garimā* in *Yoga* works.

How to be able to fly through empty space like a bird is further told: "When the *Kuṇḍalinī* is filled with the *Prāṇa*, it propels it upwards. The *Kuṇḍalinī* then becomes straight like a stick as an excited serpent. If at that time all the outlets of the body are closed, the body becomes filled with the *Prāṇa* even as a leather bag is filled with water. (VIa, 81, 46-48.) Through this practice one becomes able to fly into the empty space, and can even go up to the height where Indra can go. (VIa, 81, 49.)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> राज्यादिमोक्षपर्यन्ताः समस्ता एव संपदः ।

देहानिलविधेयत्वात्साध्याः सर्वस्य राघव ॥

<sup>2</sup> तां यदा पूरकाभ्यासादापूर्य स्थीयते सगम् ।

तदैति मैरवं स्थैर्यं कायस्यापीनता तथा ॥

<sup>3</sup> यदा पूरकपूर्णान्तरायत्तप्राणमारुतम् ।

नीयते संविदेवोर्ध्वं सोढुं धर्मकृमश्रमम् ॥

सर्पाव त्वरितैवोर्ध्वं याति दण्डोपमां गता ।

नाडीः सर्वाः समादाय देहबद्धा लतोपमाः ॥



The way of acquiring the power which enables one to see the invisible *Siddhas* (enlightened ones like the Masters of Theosophy) is further described thus: "One can see the invisible beings moving in the empty space, when, by the practice in *recaka* (propelling the *prāṇa* out), the *Kuṇḍalini*-force is directed through the *Brahma-nāḍī* (the *Suṣuṃṇā*, the central spinal cord) to the brain (the *Kapāṭa*) and made to be fixed there at a centre situated at a distance of 12 *āṅgulas* (6 inches?) from the forehead, and all other *nāḍīs* are kept under control." (VIa, 81, 49-51.)<sup>1</sup>

One can leave his body at will and enter another body through the following practice: "In order to be able to enter another body, a *yogin* has to practise his stay (in imagination at first) at a distance of twelve *āṅgulas* from his body through the practice of *recaka* (propelling the *Prāṇa* out). (VIa 81, 56.) When through the practice of *recaka* one can take his *Jīva* out of the *Kuṇḍalini-nāḍī*, his body is left like a stone or a lump of clay. (VIa, 82, 29-30.) He can then enter any other body of moving or unmoving beings (living or inanimate) and enjoy their condition to his heart's content. (VIa, 82, 31.) He may then remain there or return back to his own body as he pleases.

तदा समस्तमेवेदमुत्प्रावयति देहकम् ।  
नीरन्ध्रं पवनापूर्णं भस्त्रेवाम्बुततान्तरम् ॥  
इत्यभ्यासविलासेन योगेन व्योमगामिना ।  
योगिनः प्राप्नुवन्त्युच्चैर्दीना इन्द्रदशमिव ॥

<sup>1</sup> ब्रह्मनाडीप्रवाहेण शक्तिः कुण्डलिनी यदा ।  
बहिर्मुखं कपाटस्य द्वादशाङ्गुलमूर्धनि ॥  
रेचकेन प्रयोगेण नाड्यन्तरनिरोधिना ।  
मुहूर्तं स्थितिमाप्नोति तदा व्योमगदर्शनम् ॥

(VIa, 82, 32.) He may even while remaining in one body illumine many other bodies by his own consciousness, by filling the world with his own thought." (VIa, 82, 33.)<sup>1</sup>

How a *yogin* can have a vision of distant events and things is further described in the following words: "By the friction of two currents of the *Prāṇa*, namely the *prāṇa* and the *apāna*, heat is generated in the body in the same way as fire is produced by the friction of two bamboos in forests. (VIa, 81, 70.) This heat keeps the body warm, which is naturally cold, as the sun heats the whole world. (VIa, 81, 71.) This fire [within the body moves throughout the whole body, but the *yogins* meditate on it, when it manifests itself as a star over the heart, like a golden bee hovering over a lotus flower. (VIa, 81, 72.) Meditation on this light is attended with an enlightenment in which

१ मुखाद्बहिर्द्वादशान्ते रेचकाभ्यासयुक्तिः ।  
 प्राणे चिरं स्थितिं नीते प्रविशत्यपरां पुरीम् ॥  
 रेचकाभ्यासयोगेन जीवः कुण्डलिनीगृहात् ।  
 उद्धृत्य योज्यते यावदामोदः पवनादिव ॥  
 त्यज्यते विरतस्पर्न्दो देहोऽयं काष्ठलोष्ठवत् ।  
 देहेऽपि जीवेऽपि मत्तावासेचक इवादरः ॥  
 स्थावरे जङ्गमे वाऽपि यथाभिमतयेच्छया ।  
 भोक्तुं तत्संपदं सम्यग्जीवोऽन्तर्विनिवेशयते ॥  
 इति सिद्धिश्चिरं भुक्त्वा स्थितं चेत्तद्वपुः पुनः ।  
 प्रविश्यते स्वमन्यद्वा यद्यत्तात विरोचते ॥  
 देहादयस्तथा बिम्बान्न्यासवत्याऽखिलानथ ।  
 संविदा जगदापूर्य संपूर्णं स्थीयतेऽथ वा ॥

things situated at a distance of even millions of miles are revealed." (VIa 81, 73.)<sup>1</sup>

How a *yogin* can become abnormally small or large in extent is thus described: "The (above-mentioned) starlike light (fire) can be expanded and enlarged by constant meditation on it. (VIa, 82, 3.) Having grown in size and also in intensity of heat and light, it melts the whole physical body with all its organs as fire melts gold. (VIa, 82, 4.) Having then melted the second (subtle) body also, it vanishes away. (VIa, 82, 6.) Having now no *nāḍis* to reside in, the *Kuṇḍalinī Śakti* of the individual, who thus meditates, blazes out, like a flame in empty space. (VIa, 82, 7.) Within it are withdrawn and exist potentially the mind, intellect, ego, etc., of the individual. (VIa, 82, 8.) Now it is so subtle that it can move anywhere through anything—the sky, mountain, straw, wall, stone, etc.,—as it is directed. (VIa, 82, 9.) As a leather bag expands when filled with water, so also does this *Śakti* expand the body now into any form desired, by filling it, as it were, with the intense thought of the form. (VIa, 82, 10-11.) As a foetus evolves itself into a fully developed body gradually, so does this Power evolve the body into the form intensely desired and meditated upon.

<sup>1</sup> देहेष्वाजरण सर्वरसानां पवनोऽन्वहम् ।

जनयत्यग्निमन्योन्यसंघर्षाद्भिनवेणुवत् ॥

स्वभावशीतिवातात्मा देहस्तेनौघ्यमेत्यथ ।

उदितेन स सर्वाङ्गे भुवनं भानुना यथा ॥

सर्वतो विचरेदस्मिस्तत्तेजस्तारकाकृति ।

इत्थन्नहमभमरो योगिनां चिन्त्यतां गतम् ॥

तत्प्रकाशमयं ज्ञानं चिन्तितं सत्प्रयच्छति ।

येन योजनलक्षस्थं वस्तु नित्यं हि दृश्यते ॥



(VIa, 82, 12.) This *Jiva-sakti* can expand into any body, be it of the size of a mountain or of straw."

(VIa, 82, 13.)<sup>1</sup>

Before coming to the close of this chapter, it may be pointed out that the above mentioned processes are not to be understood literally. For want of clear cut distinctions between physical, mental and spiritual concepts and terms, many points are unintelligible here, although they may have much significance behind them.

<sup>1</sup>स प्रवर्धनसंवित्प्रा वायवेवाशु वर्धते ।  
 संविद्रूपतया नूनमर्कवशाति चोदयम् ॥  
 संज्याभ्रप्रथमार्काभो वृद्धिमभ्यागतः क्षणात् ।  
 गालयत्यखिलं साङ्गं देहं हेम यथाऽनलः ॥  
 जलस्पृशसिंहो युक्त्या गलयेत्प्रपदादपि ।  
 स शरीरद्वयं पश्चाद्विधूय कापि लीयते ।  
 विक्षोभितेन प्राणेन नीहारो वायव्या यथा ॥  
 आधारनाडीनिर्हाना व्योमस्थैवावशिष्यते ।  
 शक्तिः कुण्डलिनी बहेधूमलेखेव निर्गता ॥  
 क्रोडीकृतमनोबुद्धिमयजीवाद्यहंकृतिः ।  
 अन्तःस्फुरच्चमत्कारा धूमलेखेव नागरी ॥  
 बिम्बे शैले तृणे भित्तावुपले दिवि भूतले ।  
 सा यथा योज्यते यत्र तेन निर्यात्यलं तथा ॥  
 संवित्तिः सैव वायव्यरसाद्यन्तं यथाक्रमम् ।  
 रसेनापूर्णतामेति तन्त्रीभार इवाम्बुना ॥  
 रसापूर्णा यमाकारं भावयत्याशु तत्तथा ।  
 धत्ते चित्रकृतो बुद्धौ रेखा राम यथा कृतिम् ॥  
 दृढभाववशादन्तरस्थीन्याप्नोति सा ततः ।  
 मातृगर्भनिषण्णेऽपि मुसूश्मेवाङ्कुरस्थितिः ॥  
 यथाभिमतमाकारं प्रमाणं वेत्ति राघव ।  
 जीवशक्तिरवाप्नोति सुमेवादि तृणादि च ॥

As there is no ultimate distinction for Vasiṣṭha in the things existing in different planes of manifestation, he uses the same term now to mean this and now that. This makes the whole description confused.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SELF

THE most important problem of philosophy, the problem dearest to the human heart, and the problem on which more has been thought in India than on any other, is the problem: *What am I?* Hitherto in our treatment we have been occupied largely with the world and the mind. Let us now learn what Vasiṣṭha tells us with regard to this most important problem, the Self.

The best way to approach the problem of the Self will be to begin with the analysis of Experience. Vasiṣṭha distinguishes, like other philosophers of the *Vedānta*, four types or levels of experience, in three of which the mind (*manas*) functions and a fourth in which the mind is not experienced. They are called by him *Jāgrat* (the waking experience), *Svapna* (the dream experience), *Suṣupti* (the sound-sleep experience) and the *Turiya* (the fourth type of experience). Corresponding to these experiences there are four states of the mind according to Vasiṣṭha, namely, the *ghora* (gross), the *sūta* (it may be rendered as subtle), the *mūḍha* (dull) and the *sattva* (pure being). The last is that state of experience where the mind is no longer a mind. It is merged in the being of the Self. So actually there are only three states of the mind, the fourth being a mindless state of experience. "There are three conditions in which the mind functions, namely, the waking,



the dream and the sound sleep. (VIa, 124, 36.) The mind exists as *ghora*, *sānta* and *mūḍha*. The *ghora* is the mind of the waking experience, the *sānta* is the mind in the dream state, and the *mūḍha* is the state of the mind in sound sleep. The state when the mind is dead (*mṛta*) is called *sattva* (the state of pure existence alone). It is a state of existence which *Yogins* experience after making effort." (VIa, 124, 37-38.)<sup>1</sup>

A description of each of these four states of experience may be gathered from the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as follows:

1. The Waking (*Jagrat*) State:

"In the physical body there exists a life-principle (*jīva-dhātu*) which keeps the body alive. It is called by various names, such as, *tejas* (lustre), *vīrya* (energy), *jīva-dhātu* (vital element), etc. (IV, 19, 15.) When the body is functioning with the mind, action and speech (*manasā*, *karmaṇā* and *gīrā*), the vital principle moves throughout the body riding on the vital airs (*prāṇa-vāyavah*). (IV, 19, 16.) Awareness or consciousness arises in whatever organ or part of the body this element flows. (IV, 19, 17.) Receiving this vital energy the sense-organs become capable of giving rise to their respective perceptions in the *jīva* (the person). (IV, 19, 18.) As long as these perceptions continue to be

१ जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्ताख्यं त्रयं रूपं हि चेतसः ॥

घोरं शान्तं च मूढं च आत्मचित्तमिहास्थितम् ।

घोरं जाग्रन्मयं चित्तं शान्तं स्वप्नमयं स्थितम् ॥

मूढं सुषुप्तभावस्थं त्रिभिर्हीनं मृतं भवेत् ।

यच्च चित्तं मृतं तत्र सत्त्वमेकं स्थितं समम् ।

तदेव योगिनः सर्वे यत्नात्संपादयन्ति हि ॥

experienced, the experience is called *jāgrat* (waking)." (IV, 19, 19.)<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Sleep (*Suṣupti*):

"When there is no activity of the body, (in action and speech), the *jīva-dhatu* is at peace within itself (not coursing through the body), and remains motionless like a lamp in a windless place, on account of vital airs being in balance, the senses, on account of their not receiving it, not perceiving external objects. (IV, 19, 20-22.) The *jīva* then exists in a potential state within the body as oil in a sesamum seed, coldness in ice, and lubricity in butter. (IV, 19, 23.) Then it is experiencing the deep-sleep state." (IV, 19, 24.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> जीवधातुः शरीरेऽन्तर्विद्यते येन जीव्यते ।  
तेजो वीर्यं जीवधातुरित्याद्यभिवमङ्ग यत् ॥  
व्यवहारी यदा कायो मनसा कर्मणा गिरा ।  
भवेत्तदा मरुबुध्नो जीवधातुः प्रसर्पति ॥  
तस्मिन्प्रसर्पत्यङ्गेषु सर्वा संविदुदेति हि ।  
दृष्टत्वात्प्रैति चित्ताख्यमन्तर्लनजगद्भ्रमम् ॥  
ईक्षणादिषु रन्ध्रेषु प्रसरन्ती बहिर्मयम् ।  
नानाकारविकारादृषं रूपमात्मनि पश्यति ॥  
स्थिरत्वात्तत्तथैवाथ जाग्रदित्यवगम्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> मनसा कर्मणा वाचा यदा क्षुभ्यति नो वपुः ।  
शान्तात्मा तिष्ठति स्वस्थो जीवधातुस्तदा त्वसौ ॥  
समतामार्गैर्वातिः श्लोभ्यते न हृदम्बरे ।  
निर्वातसदने दीपो यथाऽऽलोकैककारकः ॥  
ततः सरति नाङ्गेषु संवित्क्षुभ्यति तेन नो ।  
न चेक्षणादीन्यायाति रन्ध्राण्यायाति नो बहिः ॥  
जीवोऽन्तरेव स्फुरति तैलसंविद्यथा तिले ।  
शीतसंविद्धिम इव ज्वेहसंविद्यथा घृते ॥  
जीवाकारा कला काचिच्चितिः स्वच्छतयाऽऽत्मनि ।  
दशामायाति सौषृती सौम्यवाता विचेतनाम् ॥

### 3. The Dream (*Svapna*) State :

"If the vital principle which is existing in an undisturbed state in the deep sleep state is aroused by the vital currents, it comes to manifest itself as the mind. (IV, 19, 26.) It begins to experience the universe which exists within itself, as a seed might experience a tree potentially existing within it. (IV, 19, 27.) If the *jiva-dhatu* is disturbed by air (*vata*), the experience of journey through the sky, etc., is experienced. (IV, 19, 28.) If a liquid substance enters the seat of the vital principle, then dreams in connection with water are experienced. (IV, 19, 29.) If it is disturbed by *pitta* (heat), then the phenomena of summer season are experienced in the dream. (IV, 19, 30.) When blood runs into the vital element, red things are perceived in a dream. (IV, 19, 31.) Whatever desire arises in this state appears as realized to the sleeping person. (IV, 19, 32.) Thus dream is a state of internal experience when objects are experienced without any external stimulation of the physical senses." (IV, 19, 33.)<sup>1</sup>

१ सुषुप्ते सौम्यतां यातैः प्राणैः संचाल्यते यदा ।  
 स जीवधातुः सा संवित्तत्त्वित्तयोदिता ॥  
 स्वान्तःसंस्थजगज्जालं भावाभावैः क्रमभ्रमैः ।  
 पश्यति स्वान्तरेवाशु स्फारं बीज इव दुग्धम् ॥  
 जीवधातुर्यदा वातैः किञ्चित्संश्लुभ्यते भृशम् ।  
 ततोऽस्म्यहं सुप्त इति पश्यत्यात्मनि खे गतिम् ॥  
 यदाऽम्भसा घ्राव्यतेऽसौ तदा वार्यादिसंभ्रमम् ।  
 अन्तरेवानुभवति स्वामोदं कुसुमं यथा ॥  
 यदा पित्तादिनाऽऽक्रान्तस्तदा म्रीष्मादिसंभ्रमम् ।  
 अन्तरेवानुभवति स्फारं बहिरिवाखिलम् ॥  
 रक्ताणूणो रक्तवर्णान्देशान्कालान्बहिर्वथा ।  
 पश्यत्यनुभवात्मत्वात्तत्रैव च निमज्जति ॥



#### 4. The Fourth (*Turiya*) kind of experience :

"The state of existence in which there is no consciousness of ego or non-ego, being or non-being, which is pure, uniform, unlimited (consciousness) is called the fourth (*Turiya*) state. (VIa, 124, 23.) It cannot be called waking or dream, because there is no imagination in it, nor sleep, as there is no insensibility in it. (VIa, 124, 25.) The objective world is not experienced in this state. (VIa, 124, 26.) This state is experienced when individuality is transcended, when equanimity of the mind is acquired, when the fickleness of the mind is given up. (VIa, 124, 27.) Consciousness without ideation is the fourth state." (VIa, 124, 36.)<sup>1</sup>

The Fourth kind of experience is not only an idea but a reality. Even modern writers have begun to admit its reality. Carpenter says: "It is more than probable that in the hidden births of time there lurks a consciousness which is not the consciousness of sensation and which is not the consciousness of self—or

सेवते वासनां यां तां सोऽन्तः पश्यति निद्रितः ।

पवनक्षोभितो रन्ध्रैर्बहिरक्षादिभिर्यथा ॥

अनाक्रान्तेन्द्रियाच्छ्रो यतः क्षुब्धोऽन्तरेव सः ।

संविदाऽनुभवत्याशु स स्वप्न इति कथ्यते ॥

<sup>1</sup> अहंभावानहंभावौ त्यक्त्वा सदसती तथा ।

यदसक्तं समं स्वच्छं स्थितं तत्तुर्यमुच्यते ॥

नैतज्ज्ञाप्रज्ञ च स्वप्नं संकल्पानामसंभवात् ।

सुषुप्तभावो नाप्येतदभावाज्जडता स्थितेः ॥

शान्तं सम्यक्प्रबुद्धानां यथा स्थितमिदं जगत् ।

विलीनं तुर्यमेवाहुरबुद्धानां स्थिरं स्थितम् ॥

अहंकारकलात्यागे समतायाः समुद्रवे ।

विशरारौ कृते चित्ते तुर्यावस्थोपतिष्ठते ॥

निर्विकल्पा हि चित्तुर्यं तदेवास्तीह नेतरत् ॥

at least which includes and entirely surpasses these—a consciousness in which the contrast between the ego and the external world, and the distinction between subject and object fall away." (Edward Carpenter: *From Adam's Peak to Elephantia*, Chap.: "Consciousness without Thought," p. 154.) "The true subject is the simple, self-subsistent, universal spirit which cannot be directly presented as an object." (*Ibid.*, p. 271.) Rādhā-kṛṣṇan speaks of it as: "It is a type of experience which is not clearly differentiated into a subject-object state, an integral undivided consciousness in which not merely this or that side of man's nature but his whole being seems to find itself. It is a condition of consciousness in which feelings are fused, ideas melt into one another, boundaries broken and ordinary distinctions transcended. Past and present fade away into a sense of timeless being, consciousness and being are not there different from each other. All being is consciousness and all consciousness is being. Thought and reality coalesce and a creative merging of subject and object results. Life grows conscious of its incredible depths. In this fulness of felt life and freedom (*ānanda*) the distinction of the knower and the known disappears. The privacy of the individual self is broken and invaded by a universal self which the individual feels as his own." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *An Idealist View of Life*, pp. 91-92.)

Now, in the light of the fact that we have our existence in these four kinds of experience, at one time or another, we can find out what the real and ultimate nature of the Self may be. But we do not find in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, as in the *Pañca-dasī* and other works on *Advaita Vedānta*, any light thrown on the problem of the Self through the study of these types of experience. In fact no systematic approach is made to the problem

in the entire work. Only a few statements and observations are made here and there, which we have gathered here.

Vasiṣṭha points out that there are four beliefs (*niscayas*) about the Self: Some people believe that the Self is nothing but the physical body. Others believe that the Self is nothing but the mind. A third class of people believe that the Self is neither the body nor the mind, but something beyond both. They hold that the Self is a spiritual entity unaffected by the states of the body and the mind, and so free from them; it exists in its own nature. It has no relation with the body in any way. This view is preferred by Vasiṣṭha to the other two. But he seems to have a fourth view of his own in preference to all of them, according to which the Self of every one is the Infinite and Whole Consciousness which manifests itself in the world both as the subject and the object. It is according to him the Whole Reality. Nothing exists outside the Self. The ego as well as the non-ego are within the womb of the Self. Thus we find:

"One belief about the Self (*aham*, I) is that "I am this body" from head to foot, born of parents. This conviction is a cause of bondage. (V, 17, 14.) To think and believe that one is the physical body will always bring misery and never peace to him. (V, 73, 11.) This belief should be got rid of like an enemy, for it is really a great enemy." (IV, 33, 54.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> आपादमस्तकमहं मातापितृविनिर्मितः ।

इत्येको निश्चयो राम बन्धायासद्विलोकनात् ॥

देहोऽहमिति तां विद्धि दुःखायैव न शान्तये ।

वर्ज्य एव दुरात्माऽसौ शत्रुः परः स्मृतः ॥



The second belief is that "the essence (or the Self) of the individual is the mind, which is of the nature of *samkalpa*, and which endures as long as the world-experience exists. (VIa, 124, 19.)<sup>1</sup>

There is another view that "I am something very subtle, subtler than the pointed end of a hair, beyond all states. (V, 17, 15.) It is very minute (*anu*) and beyond all. (V, 73, 10.) It is not related to anything else, and is imagined to be subtler than the hundredth part of a hair." (IV, 33, 51.)<sup>2</sup> (Compare the *S'vetasvatara Upaniṣad*, V, 9.) How the Self is beyond every thing else in the personality of man is shewn in the following: "I" cannot be the physical body, because the latter by itself is unconscious and inert (*jaḍa*). (VIa, 78, 17.) It is a fact known even to children, and experienced by every one. (VIa, 78, 18.) The organs of action are parts of the body and so identical with it. They are therefore also inert and unconscious. (VIa, 78, 18-19.) The organs of knowledge are also seen to be inert (VIa, 78, 19), because they have no self-movement, but are moved by the mind. (VIa, 78, 20.) The mind also which is capable of imagining everything is inert (VIa, 78, 20), because it is moved to activity by the ideas inherent in the intellect. (VIa, 78, 21.) The intellect too which has the power of having definite ideas is inert (*jaḍa*), because it requires the ego to direct it. (VIa, 78, 21-22.) The ego itself is inert (*jaḍa*)

<sup>1</sup> स्वसंकल्पमयाकारं यावत्संसारमावि यत् ।

चित्तं तद्विद्धि जीवस्य रूपं रामातिवाहिकम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> अतीतः सर्वभावैर्भ्यो बालाग्रादप्यहं तनुः ।

परोऽणुः सकलातीतरूपोऽहं चेत्यहंकृतिः ।

सर्वस्माद्व्यतिरिक्तोऽहं बालाग्रशतकल्पितः ॥

because it is falsely assumed to be by the *jīva* (the monad that lives). (VIa, 78, 22.) The monad again in itself is not the ultimate reality (VIa, 78, 23), for it is a limited form of consciousness residing in the heart on the support of something else. (VIa, 78, 24.) It is the Pure Consciousness tending towards objectivity that enlivens the monad. (VIa, 78, 25.) This form of pure Consciousness which tends towards objectivity is itself dependent on the Pure Consciousness " (VIa, 78, 29),<sup>1</sup> which is alone real and the ultimate Self of us.

The ultimate Self is not touched by the conditions and states of the body. It cannot have any relation

<sup>1</sup> देहस्तावज्जडो मूढो नाहमित्येव निश्चयः ।

आबालमेतत्संसिद्धं मर्तौ चैवानुभूयते ॥

कर्मेन्द्रियगणश्चास्मादभिन्नावयवात्मकः ।

अवयवावयविनोर्न भेदो जड एव च ॥

बुद्धीन्द्रियगणोऽप्येवं जड एवेति दृश्यते ।

प्रेर्यते मनसा यस्माद्यष्टेषु भुवि लोष्टकः ॥

मनश्चैवं जडं मन्ये संकल्पात्मकशक्तिं यत् ।

क्षेपणैरिव पाषाणः प्रेर्यते बुद्धिनिश्चयैः ॥

बुद्धिर्निश्चयरूपैवं जडा सत्तैव निश्चयः ।

खातेनेव सरिकूलं साऽहंकारेण बाह्यते ॥

अहंकारोऽपि निःसारो जड एव शवात्मकः ।

जीवेन जन्यते यक्षो बालेनेव भ्रमात्मकः ॥

जीवश्च चेतनाकाशो वातात्मा हृदये स्थितः ।

सुकुमारोऽन्तरन्येन केनापि परिजीवति ॥

जीवो जीवति जीर्णेन चिद्रूपेणात्मरूपिणा ।

चेत्यभ्रमवता जीवश्चिद्रूपेणैव जीवति ॥

एवं चिद्रूपमप्येतत्वेत्योन्मुखतया स्वयम् ।

जडं शून्यमसत्कल्पं चैतन्येन प्रबोध्यते ॥

with the body. "The body and the Self are not related, for they are as opposed in their nature as darkness and light. (VIa, 6, 6.) As a lotus flower is not touched by the mud, so the Self is not touched by the body. (V, 6, 25.) The Self is above old age, death, misery, pleasure and pain, being and non-being (which are the conditions of the body and not of the Self)." (VIa, 6, 15-16.)<sup>1</sup>

The fourth belief about the nature of the Self (*aham*), which is finally accepted by Vasiṣṭha, is: "I am the whole Universe and am existing in the state of subtle etheric void (because I am beyond the mind and the senses). This conviction will bring liberation. (V, 17, 17.) (I am everything in the universe), I am the sky, I am the directions, I am gods, I am demons, I am all the worlds, I am sacrifice. (V, 73, 3.) I am darkness, clouds, oceans, air, fire, etc. (V, 73, 4.) All that exists in the universe is a portion of my-Self, as the waves of an ocean are of the ocean. He seeth truly who seeth thus. (IV, 22, 33.) I am the Consciousness (*cit*) in the Sun, in all creatures, living and non-living, gods or demons. (V, 26, 12.) I am the fragrance in flowers; I am the beauty of leaves and flowers; beauty of beauties I am; and I am the experience behind all forms." (V, 34, 52.)<sup>2</sup>

१ नात्मा शरीरसंबन्धी शरीरमपि नात्मनि ।  
मियो विलक्षणावेतौ प्रकाशतमसी यथा ॥  
देहेनास्य न संबन्धो मनागेवामलात्मनः ।  
हेमः पङ्कलवेनेव तद्रतस्यापि मानवाः ॥  
जरामरणमापञ्च सुखदुःखे भवाभवौ ॥  
मनागपि न सन्तीह तस्मात्त्वं निर्वृतो भव ॥

२ अहं जगद्वा सकलं शून्यं व्योमसमं तदा ।  
एवमेव चतुर्थोऽन्यो निश्चयो मोक्षसिद्धये ॥



This kind of conception about the real nature of the self is not alien to some thinkers of the modern times as will appear from the following statements: "The Conscious Self of each of us" says Myres "does not comprise the whole of consciousness or of the faculty within us. There exists a more comprehensive consciousness, a profounder faculty, which for the most part remains potential only." (Myres: *Human Personality*, abridged, p. 13.) Du Prel writes: "Man appears as a being of groundless depth, reaching with its roots into the metaphysical region." (Du Prel: *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. I, p. 124.) "We are already one with the Absolute," Kingsland says "and our quest is not for something which we do not possess, but simply a self-realization." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 367.) Randall observes: "Science is rapidly succeeding in demonstrating the unbroken oneness and perfect internal unity of the entire, all-inclusive being of the world. . . . The universe is a perfect organic unity in an infinite variety of organic parts, including man; it is a unity in diversity. It is a mere totality of many separate beings and things; it is not

अहं खमहमादित्यो दिशोऽहमहमप्यधः ।  
 अहं दैत्या अहं देवा लोकाश्चाहमहं महः ॥  
 अहं तमोऽहमन्नाणि भूः समुद्रादिकं त्वहम् ।  
 रजो वायुरधाम्निश्च जगत्सर्वमिदं त्वहम् ॥  
 यन्नाम किञ्चित्त्रैलोक्यं स एवावयवो मम ।  
 तद्भोऽन्धाविवेत्यन्तर्यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥  
 अहं चिदम्बरे भानावहं चिद्रूपतपजरे ।  
 सुरासुरेषु चिदहं स्थावरेषु चरेषु च ॥  
 कुसुमेष्वहमामोदः पुष्पपत्रेष्वहं छविः ।  
 छविष्वहं रूपकला रूपेष्वनुभवोऽप्यहम् ॥

a mere external union, nor a mere organization; but it is instead, an integrity, a perfect whole and an indivisible organism of being." (John Herman Randall: *The Spirit of the New Philosophy*, p. 125.) "Our human consciousness is nature's cosmic consciousness, individualized in us. Our human intelligence is nature's cosmic intelligence, expressing and manifesting itself through us as through its brains and minds. Our minds are not our minds only; they are in a real and deeper sense the minds of the Cosmos, and as such, they must be in essential unity with it." (*Ibid.*, p. 129.) "As we probe still deeper the mystery of the Self, while we admit that, on the surface, finite selves do appear to stand to each other in this relation of mutual exclusiveness, we find that the experience of every Self is included in a larger experience, that each Self is a part of a Greater Self. This brings us to the very heart of the truth. No other view is possible than that the true Self in each individual is a form under which Reality, or the Life-Principle or God, finds expression; then, each Self is not only unique in itself, but is also, on this very account, a unique appearance in a finite centre of the underlying Reality that "rolls through all things". Thus we are forced to admit that, in their deepest essence all beings are One Being, and all individual Selves are One Self; and there are no such things as private, separate, exclusive, individual beings or selves, save in the false and illusory thinking." (*Ibid.*, p. 157.) Trine likewise says: "Man therefore is essentially Divine, part and parcel of the Infinite Life." (Trine: *The Winning of the Best*, p. 52.) "The great central fact in human life, in your life and in mine, is the coming into a conscious, vital realization of our oneness with this Infinite Life, and the opening

of ourselves fully to this divine inflow." (Trine: *In Tune with the Infinite*, p. 8.) So does Rādhā-kṛṣṇan say: "Our analysis of the intuitive consciousness tells us that we ourselves are that one spirit and the empirical world we are familiar with is the arrangement produced by the limited part of ourselves active in waking consciousness. If we learn to live within, we shall respond to the presence within us, which is our more real self, profound, calm and joyous, that which supports and sustains all manifestations." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 207.) "The spiritualized man is a new genus of man exhibiting a new quality of life. His self becomes as wide as the world itself, and he feels that the one spirit is present in all minds, lives and bodies." (*Ibid.*, p. 303.) Carpenter also says: "It seems to me more and more clear that the word "I" has practically infinite range of meaning" (Carpenter: *The Labour Prophet*.) Even the atom is regarded as infinite why then not the self? "The real atom, instead of being the smallest of the small, is the largest of the large, for every so-called atom is nothing less in *substance* than the *One Substance*—which is the only thing in the Universe which cannot be divided or cut." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 81.)



## CHAPTER VIII

### DEATH AND AFTER-DEATH EXPERIENCES

DEATH is the most common, yet the least understood fact. It is one of the most difficult problems of philosophy, for there is no direct evidence usually available as to what actually happens in and after death. Recently there has been an attempt made in the West by the Psychical Research Society to study the problem of death, and some thinkers have come to believe, on the force of the evidence collected, that death does not bring human personality to an end. Sir Oliver Lodge, for example says: "I am, for personal purposes, convinced of the persistence of human existence beyond bodily death; and though I am unable to justify that belief in a full and complete manner, it is a belief which has been produced by scientific evidence; that is, it is based upon facts and experience . . ." (*The Proofs of Life after Death*, p. 134.) "I assert emphatically that there is evidence for survival, and that some of the evidence is thoroughly good. It can no more be treated superficially than any other of scientific experience." (Oliver Lodge: *Making of Man*, p. 35). "The whole centre of gravity lies, even on the level of Psychology, in the affirmation and not in the negation of the continuity of life after death." (W. Tudor Jones: *Metaphysics of Life and Death*, p. 186.) In ancient India

it was a common belief that a super-normal vision could be acquired through Yogic practices which enabled one to observe the phenomenon of death as well as we perceive the objects of our knowledge. Vasiṣṭha claims to have known everything directly, and speaks on death from his own experience, and not as a speculative philosopher.

There is nothing in death, says Vasiṣṭha, of which one should be afraid, as Socrates said to his disciples while he was going to be poisoned. (*Vide Churchill: Trial and Death of Socrates.*) For, even if we do not know anything definitely about death, there are two possibilities after death. Either the dead wholly cease to be, or they live in other bodies. "If death means the total extinction of the dead, it is a very happy event, for it brings about the cessation of the feverish restlessness of life." (VIb, 101, 26, 23.) Such a state of freedom from the pleasures and pains of life would be a real living. (VIb, 101, 24.) "If", on the other hand, "the dead one gets another body, it is an occasion for rejoicing, for death would in that case be a destruction of (the old and deceased) body only. (VIb, 101, 25.) (In that case) we should congratulate the dead rather than be sorry for them." (VIb, 101, 22.)<sup>1</sup>

Vasiṣṭha, however, is not agnostic on this problem. He has a definite view of his own. He says: "Death

मृत्तिरत्यन्तनाशश्चेत्तद्वामयसंशयः ॥  
 मृतश्चेन्न भवेद्भूयः सोऽत्राप्युपचयो महान् ।  
 भावाभावग्रहोत्सर्गज्वरः प्रशममागतः ॥  
 मरणं जीवितं तस्मान्न दुःखं न सुखं यतः ॥  
 मृतस्य देहलाभश्चेन्न एव तदुत्सवः ।  
 मृत्तिर्नाशो हि देहस्य सा मृतिः परमं सुखम् ॥  
 मरणात्मनि किं मृदा हृषस्थाने विषीदय ॥

is not really the total extinction. (VIb, 18, 1.) To say that a dead person has ceased to exist is wrong. He experiences other worlds in different time-space-orders hid from our view. (V, 71, 65.) Having given up one body, but bound up with desires, the person who dies is carried away to other worlds in different orders of time and space. (V, 71, 67, 68.) It is just as a dreaming man may experience his death in his dream and may still continue to dream other dreams, so a waking man sees another waking dream after his death. (VIb, 105, 24.) The man who dies here wakes up in some other world. (VIb, 105, 29.) To him that world in which he wakes up becomes a real world of waking experience, and this world-experience is then looked on by him as a (past) dream. (VIb, 105, 30.) The event of death is just like a swoon, a temporary withdrawal or stoppage of the activity of imagination." (VIb, 18, 1.)<sup>1</sup> Tudor Jones similarly says: "Our death is our birth to a life beyond." (*Metaphysics of Life and Death*, p. 196). "The seeming end," says Geley, "is not really the end, for it cannot touch the true real essence of the individual. . . It destroys only

<sup>1</sup> मरणं सर्वनाशात्म न कदाचन विद्यते ॥  
 मृतो नष्ट इति प्रोक्तो मन्ये तच्च मृषा ऽसत् ।  
 स देशकालान्तरितो भूत्वा भूत्वाऽनुभूयते ॥  
 वासनावस्थितो जीवो यात्युत्सृज्य शरीरकम् ॥  
 अन्यस्मिन्वितते देशे कालेऽन्यस्मिन् राघव ॥  
 स्वप्नद्रष्टा यथा स्वप्नसंसारे मृतिमाप्तवान् ।  
 अन्यं जाग्रन्मयं स्वप्नं द्रष्टुं भूयः प्रजायते ॥  
 इह जाग्रन्मृतो जन्तुः प्रबुद्धोऽन्यत्र कथ्यते ॥  
 मृत्वाऽन्यत्र प्रबुद्धस्य जाग्रत्स्वप्नो भवत्यलम् ॥  
 स्वसंकल्पान्तरस्थैर्यं मृतिरित्यभिधीयते ॥



a semblance, a temporary representation." (Geley: *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, p. 304.)

The process how death occurs in a body is described in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* as follows: "When on account of the diseases of the body its *nāḍis* lose their vigour and thus become unable to expand and contract in order to exhale or inhale air, the body loses its harmony and becomes restless. (III, 54, 59.) The inhaled air does not then properly come out, nor does the exhaled air re-enter the body. So respiration stops. (III, 54, 60.) Respiration stopping (III, 54, 61), the creature becomes senseless and is dead. (III, 55, 2.) All the desires and ideas of the individual then exist withdrawn within himself. (III, 55, 5.) The individual with all his *vāsanās* (desires or previous impressions) within himself is called a *jīva*. (III, 55, 6.) When the body is dead, the *prāṇas* of the individual with the *jīva* within them come out of the body and roam in the air. (VIb, 18, 6.) The atmospheric air is full of a number of such *prāṇas* which have *jīvas* within them, these *jīvas* themselves having their respective world-experiences potentially existing within them—I can see them. (VIb, 18, 8.) At that time the individual with all his *vāsanās* within him is called *preta* (gone to the other world)." (III, 55, 7.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यदा व्यथावशान्नाड्यः स्वसंकोचविकासनैः ।  
गृह्णन्ति मारुतो देहे तदोज्झति निजां स्थितिम् ॥  
प्रविष्टा न विनिर्यान्ति गताः संप्रविशन्ति नो ।  
यदा वाता विनाडीत्वात्तदा स्पन्दात्स्मृतिर्भवेत् ॥  
न विशत्येव वातो न निर्याति पवनो यदा ।  
शरीरनाडीवैधुर्यान्मृत इत्युच्यते तदा ॥  
नाडीप्रवाहे विधुरे यदा वातविसंस्थितिम् ।  
जन्तुः प्राप्नोति हि तदा शाम्यतीवास्य चेतना ॥

Vasiṣṭha does not seem to think that a *preta* has to travel to any other place to undergo the experience of the other world, as is generally believed. To experience another world one does not require that. Even here and now any kind of experience can be had. Death only means a change in the kind of experience. He thinks: "In that very place where one dies, one experiences another world after the insensibility of death is over." (III, 55, 9.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what a modern writer says: "And what is that 'change called death' but precisely this change in our perception? Having lost our gross physical body, our faculties open out on another plane; but that plane is not necessarily somewhere else in space, and we may enter 'heaven'—or the other place,—though we have never left the Earth." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 118.)

There is a general belief that death is a very painful occurrence; that one suffers unbearable agonies at the time of dying. Vasiṣṭha tells us that every dying man does not undergo pains or agonies at the time of death. It is only the ignorant people, who are merged in worldly life and who never practise concentration, *dharana*, etc., who suffer excruciating pains

चेतनं वासनायुक्तं स्वात्मतत्त्वेऽवतिष्ठति ॥  
 जीव इत्युच्यते तस्य नामाणोर्वासनावतः ॥  
 मृते पुंसि नमोवातैर्मिलन्ति प्राणवायवः ॥  
 सप्राणवातैः पवनैः स्फुरत्संकल्पगर्भितैः ।  
 सर्वा एव दिशः पूर्णाः पश्यामीमाः समन्ततः ॥  
 ततोऽसौ प्रेतशब्देन प्रोच्यते व्यवहारिभिः ।  
 चेतनं वासनामिश्रमामोदानिलवत्स्थितम् ॥

<sup>1</sup> तस्मिन्नेव प्रदेशेऽन्तः पूर्ववत्स्मृतिमान्भवेत् ।  
 तदेव मृतिमूर्च्छान्ते पश्यत्यन्यशरीरकम् ॥

while dying. "Those who are wise and those who have been practising *dhāraṇā* (intense concentration) give up their bodies quite peacefully at the time of death. (III, 54, 36.) But the ignorant undergo painful experiences. (III, 54, 37.) He who has not refined his mind through the study of good books and association with the wise, experiences very severe pains at the time of death—such as if he were thrown into fire." (III, 54, 39.)<sup>1</sup>

Some of the painful experiences of the ignorant while they are dying are described in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* thus: "At the moment of death when the throat is choking, sight becoming dim and the countenance fading away, the indiscriminate creature becomes helpless. (III, 54, 40.) Deep darkness spreads around the dimmed sight. (III, 54, 41.) An acute pain seizes on the whole frame. (III, 54, 42.) Now he feels as if tossed up in the air; now hurled down in the state of dizziness; now falling down into a dark pit; now thrown into a valley. (III, 54, 43.) He wants to speak aloud of his torments, but is unable to do so" (III, 54, 44), etc., etc. (III, 54, 45-50.) "Gradually all the objects of his consciousness become vague and are lost sight of. (III, 54, 51.) His memory fades, and he loses the remembrance of the past and the present. (III, 54, 52.) On account of over-powering dulness, his mind loses its power of thinking, and at

<sup>1</sup> अभ्यस्य धारणान्निष्ठो देहं त्यक्त्वा यथासुखम् ।

प्रयाति धारणाभ्यासी युक्तियुक्तस्तथैव च ॥

मूर्खः स्वमृतिकालेऽसौ दुःखमेतदवशाशयः ॥

अशास्त्रसंस्कृतमतिरसज्जनपरायणः ।

मृतावनुभवत्यन्तर्दाहमग्नाविव च्युतः ॥



last he merges into deep darkness of insensibility." (III, 54, 53.)<sup>1</sup>

How the experience of a new world evolves after the insensibility of death is over is described by Vasistha

१ यदा घर्घरकाण्डत्वं वैरूप्यं दृष्टिवर्जनम् ।  
 गच्छत्येषोऽविवेकात्मा तदा भवति दीनवीः ॥  
 परमान्धमनालोको दिवाऽप्युदिततारकः ।  
 सान्धदिग्मण्डलाभोगो घनमेचकिताम्बरः ॥  
 मर्मत्र्यधाविच्छुरितः प्रभवद्दृष्टिमण्डलः ।  
 आकाशीभूतवसुधो वसुधाभूतखान्तरः ॥  
 परिवृत्तकुण्डचक्र उद्यमान इवाणवे ।  
 नीयमान इवाकाशे घननिद्रोन्मुखाशयः ॥  
 अन्धकूप इवापन्नः शिलान्तरिव योजितः ।  
 स्वयं जडीभवद्गुणो विनिकृत्त इवाशये ॥  
 पततीव नभोमार्गात्तृणावर्त इवार्पितः ।  
 रथे द्रुत इवारूढो हिमवद्रलनोन्मुखः ॥  
 व्याकुर्वन्निव संसारं बान्धवानस्पृशन्निव ।  
 भ्रमितः क्षेपणेनेव वातयन्त्र इवास्थितः ॥  
 भ्रमितो वा भ्रम इव कृष्टो रशनयेव वा ।  
 भ्रमन्निव जलावर्ते शस्त्रयन्त्र इवार्पितः ॥  
 प्रोद्यमानस्तृणमिव बहत्पर्जन्यमारुते ।  
 आरुह्य वारिपूरेण निपतन्निव चार्णवे ॥  
 अनन्तगगने श्वभ्रे चक्रावर्ते पतन्निव ।  
 अश्विधरुर्वीविपर्यासदशामनुभवन्स्थितः ॥  
 पतन्निवानवरतं प्रोत्पतन्निव चाभितः ।  
 सूत्काराकर्णनोद्भान्तः पूर्णसर्वेन्द्रियव्रणः ॥  
 क्रमाच्छयामलतां यान्ति तस्य सर्वाक्षसंविदः ।  
 पूर्वापरं न जानाति स्मृतिस्तानवमागता ॥  
 मनः कल्पनसामर्थ्यं त्यजत्यस्य विमोहतः ।  
 अविवेकेन तेनासौ महामोहे निमज्जति ॥

in the following passages: "The insensibility which is experienced by every one is like the dark night of *pralaya* (involution of the world). (III, 40, 31.) After that is over, every individual *jīva* spreads out its own peculiar world like a dream. (III, 40, 32.) As the cosmos is evolved after the night of the *pralaya*, so also is evolved the world of every individual after the insensibility of death. (III, 40, 33.) What the monad experiences within itself spreading as an objective-continuum with potential movements within it is called the *pradhana*. (III, 40, 38.) It is called the void, the *prakṛti*, the *avyakta*, the *jaḍajaḍa* (conscious-unconscious principle). (III, 40, 39.) When it becomes pregnated with awareness, it is called *Mahat*. Then evolve the subtle objects, time and space, and the elements from this void (the undifferentiated mass of objective continuum). (III, 40, 40.) Then it becomes the five senses, and also manifests itself as the subtle body. (III, 40, 41.) The subtle body itself is later experienced as a gross body through the intensity of its idea (of physicality). (III, 40, 42.) Then spring up various other forms in time and space." (III, 40, 43.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> मरणादिमयी मूर्च्छा प्रत्येकेनानुभूयते ।  
 येषां तां विद्धि सुमते महाप्रलययामिनीम् ॥  
 तदन्ते तनुते सर्गं सर्वं एव पृथक्पृथक् ।  
 सहजस्वप्नसंकल्पान्संभ्रमाचलनृत्नवत् ॥  
 महाप्रलयरात्र्यन्ते चिरादात्ममनोवपुः ।  
 यथेदं तनुते तद्वत्प्रत्येकं मूल्यनन्तरम् ॥  
 जीवो हि मृतिमूर्च्छान्ते यदन्तः प्रोन्मिषन्निव ।  
 अनुन्मिषित एवास्ते तत्प्रधानमुदाहृतम् ॥  
 तद्वयोमप्रकृतिः प्रोक्ता तदव्यक्तं जडाजडम् ।  
 संस्मृतेरस्मृतेर्धैव क्रम एव भवोदये ॥

That the after-death experience is of the nature of an ideal construction like that of a dream is very well borne out by the evidence of the Psychical Research. Carrington rightly points out, "If the next world exists at all, it must certainly be some sort of *mental* world, in which the environment is, so to say, *created by the mind*. Time and again, it has been asserted, through various mediums that this apparent mental creation is a fact. It has also been constantly asserted that, for some time after death, the mind of the recently deceased person is in an abnormal dream-like condition, subject to hallucinations and illusions of all sorts, and likely to imagine things which do not actually exist, but which *seem* to exist at the time just as they seem to exist for the dreamer." (Carrington: *The Story of Psychic Science*, p. 310).

This is only a general description of the rise of an objective world-experience after the insensibility of death, and it does not differ from the rise of a dream-world or the cosmos after the final dissolution of the universe. But is there any definite information with regard to any specialities of the after-death experiences? Is there any truth in what all religions of the world have been teaching about what they call

बोधोन्मुखत्वे हि महत्तत्प्रबुद्धं यदा भवेत् ।  
 तदा तन्मात्रदिकालक्रिया भूताद्युदेति खात् ॥  
 तदेवोच्छ्रान्तमाबुद्धं भवतीन्द्रियपञ्चकम् ।  
 तदेव बुध्यते देहः स एषोऽस्वातिवाहिकः ॥  
 चिरकालप्रत्ययतः कल्पनापरिपीवरः ।  
 आधिभौतिकताबोधमाधत्ते चैष बालवत् ॥  
 ततो दिकालकलनास्तदाधारतया स्थिताः ।  
 उद्यन्त्यनुदिता एव वायोः स्पन्दक्रिया इव ॥



heaven and hell, to which the dead are believed to go after their bodily demise on this earth? Is there any account of the deeds done here to be elsewhere rendered? Vasiṣṭha's idealism can find no difficulty in accepting any and every one of the views on the subject. According to him, as we have already seen, our world is an imagination of our mind, and it is always fashioned in accordance with our own thoughts, convictions and beliefs. "The *pretas* (dead) experience, after the insensibility of death, a situation in accordance with their *vāsanās* (predispositions)." (III, 55, 26.)<sup>1</sup> E. D. Walker similarly says: "The condition of the period intervening between death and birth, like all other epochs is framed by the individual. The inner character makes a Paradise, a Purgatory, or an Inferno of any place. . . . In the environment beyond death, where the subjective states of the soul are supreme the appearance of the universe and the feelings of the self are created well or ill, by the central individual. There must be as many heavens and hells as there are good and bad beings." (E. D. Walker: *Re-incarnation*, p. 293.) Our future world-experiences will therefore be determined in accordance with our religious beliefs and expectations, if they are serious and strong. A Christian might probably experience after his death what he has been throughout his life believing the next world to be. A Mohammedan may find after his death a heaven full of the pleasures he has been imagining to be there throughout his life on earth. Here is a description of the experiences of some *jīvas* after their death, which shows how our religious views create a world for us.

<sup>1</sup> स्ववासनानुसारेण प्रेता एतां व्यवस्थितिम् ।

मूर्च्छन्तेऽनुभवन्त्यन्तः क्रमेणैवाक्रमेण च ॥

"They experience that after having died they are getting new bodies made of the offerings (*piṇḍadi-dāna*) given to them by their relatives. (III, 55, 27.) They then experience that the messengers of Death with nooses in their hands have come to fetch them to the realm of *Yama* (the lord of death). They now feel that they are being carried away by them. (III, 55, 28.) The righteous ones feel that they are being carried away in heavenly cars (*vimāna*) to the gardens of paradise which they have secured by their meritorious actions done in the previous life. (III, 55, 29.) The sinful, however, experience that they are being carried away through snow and forests abounding in thorny bushes and prickly leaves as a result of their sins. (III, 55, 30.) Those of average merit (*i.e.*, neither very sinful nor very virtuous) experience as having a clear and smooth passage along soft grassy pathways shaded by cooling arbours, and having sufficient provision for water. (III, 55, 31.) Then they experience that they have arrived in the world of *Yama* (the dispenser of the fruits of our actions). They now experience that they are in the presence of the protector of all beings, and that a judgment is now being delivered on their actions in the court of the Lord of Death. (III, 55, 32.) They now feel that they are rewarded or punished in accordance with their actions on the earth. (III, 55, 35.) They then experience the enjoyments of heaven or the torments of hell. Then they feel that they are again going to take birth on the earth." (III, 55, 36.)<sup>1</sup> Compare the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (IV, 4, 6):

<sup>1</sup> आदौ मृता वयमिति बुध्यन्ते तदनुक्रमात् ।

बन्धुपिण्डादिदानेन प्रोत्पन्ना इति वेदिनः ॥

"After he has received reward  
For all, that he has here performed,  
He comes back from that other world,  
Into this world of deeds below".

(Deussen: *The System of Vedānta*, p. 388.)

The *pretas* (dead) are divided by Vasiṣṭha into six classes according to their moral status which determines their after-death experiences. "The *pretas* are of six kinds, namely, the slightly sinful, the ordinarily sinful, the greatly sinful, the slightly virtuous, the ordinarily virtuous, and the greatly virtuous." (III, 55, 11-12.) Now the after-death experiences of some of them are described: "Some of the most sinful *pretas* continue to be experiencing the insensibility of death like a stone for a period of a year. Regaining awareness they experience that they are doomed to suffer from the endless torments of hell which their *vāsana*s

ततो यम भटा एते कालपाशान्विता इति ।  
नीयमानः प्रयाम्येभिः क्रमाद्यमपुं त्विति ॥  
उद्यानानि विमानानि शोभनानि पुनः पुनः ।  
स्वकर्मभिरुपात्तानि दिव्यानीत्येव पुण्यवान् ॥  
हिमानीकण्टकश्वभ्रशस्त्रपत्रवनानि च ।  
स्वकर्मदुष्कृतोत्थानि संप्राप्तानीति पापवान् ॥  
इयं मे सौम्यसंपाता सरणिः शीतशाङ्गुली ।  
क्लिग्धच्छाया सवापीका पुरःसंस्थेति मध्यमः ॥  
अयं प्राप्तो यमपुरमहमेष स भूतपः ।  
अयं कर्मविचारोऽत्र कृत इत्यनुभूतिमान् ॥  
इतोऽयमहमादिष्टः स्वकर्मफलभोजने ।  
गच्छाम्याशु शुभं स्वर्गमितो नरकमेव च ॥  
यः स्वर्गोऽयं मया मुक्तो मुक्तोऽयं नरकोऽयं वा ।  
इमास्ता योनयो मुक्ता जायेऽहं संसृतौ पुनः ॥



have brought them, for a long time. (III, 55, 13-14.) They then undergo the experience of hundreds of incarnations until they finally get rid of the experience of world-illusion by finding peace within. (III, 55, 15.) There are others in this class who, after their torpor of death is over, begin to experience the unutterable pain of insensibility in the form of immovable trees, etc. (III, 55, 16.) Then they undergo the torments of hell, after which they are again born on earth in accordance with their earthly desires. (III, 55, 17.) Those of ordinary sin experience the inertness of stone for some time after their death. (III, 55, 18.) Being awakened to consciousness, they, then or after some time, undergo the experience of the lives of birds, reptiles or beasts, before they turn to their usual lives in the world. (III, 55, 19.) The slightly sinful souls, often, immediately after the insensibility of death, come to assume some human form to continue their earthly existence in accordance with their previous desires. (III, 55, 20.) They come to the worldly consciousness soon after their death and their previous desires and imagination evolve new worlds in their experience in a dreamlike manner. (III, 55, 21.) The greatly virtuous souls, soon after the insensibility of death is over, experience to be in the world of gods. (III, 55, 22.) Having enjoyed the fruits of their virtues in godly personality and in heavenly worlds, they are again born in this world in noble and rich families. (III, 55, 23.) The souls of ordinary virtues experience, after the insensibility of death is over, that they are being carried away by winds and later on are turned into the lives of plants and herbs. (III, 55, 24.) Having undergone this experience for some time they feel that they are entering human bodies as food, and there they are turned into spermatozoa

and thence enter the wombs of (expectant) mothers.”  
(III, 55, 25.)<sup>1</sup>

भवन्ति षड्विधाः प्रेतास्तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ।  
सामान्यपापिनो मध्यपापिनः स्थूलपापिनः ॥  
सामान्यधर्मा मध्यमधर्मा चोत्तमधर्मेवान् ॥  
कश्चिन्महापातकवान्वत्सरं स्मृतिमूर्च्छनम् ।  
विमूढोऽनुभवत्यन्तः पाषाणहृदयोपमः ॥  
ततः कालेन संबुद्धो वासनाजठरोदितम् ।  
अनुभूय चिरं कालं नारकं दुःखमक्षयम् ॥  
मुक्त्वा योनिशतान्युच्चैर्दुःखाद् दुःखान्तरं गतः ।  
कदाचिच्छममायाति संसारस्वप्नसंभ्रमे ॥  
अथ वा मृतिमोहान्ते जडदुःखशताकुलाम् ।  
क्षणाद्वृक्षादितमेव हृत्स्थामनुभवन्ति ते ॥  
स्ववासनानुरूपपाणि दुःखानि नरके पुनः ।  
अनुभूयाथ योनीषु जायन्ते भूतले चिरात् ॥  
अथ मध्यमपापो यो मृतिमोहादनन्तरम् ।  
स शिलाजठरं जाड्यं कंचित्कालं प्रपश्यति ॥  
ततः प्रबुद्धः कालेन केनचिद्वा तदैव वा ।  
तिर्यगादिकर्मैर्मुक्त्वा योनीः संसारमेष्यति ॥  
मृत एवानुभवति कश्चित्सामान्यपातकी ।  
स्ववासनानुसारेण देहं संपन्नमक्षतम् ॥  
स स्वप्न इव संकल्प इव चेतति तादृशम् ।  
तस्मिन्नेव क्षणे तस्य स्मृतिरित्थमुदेति च ॥  
ये तूत्तममहापुण्या मृतिमोहादनन्तरम् ।  
स्वर्गोविद्याधरपुरं स्मृत्या स्वनुभवन्ति ते ॥  
ततोऽन्यकर्मसद्दृशं मुक्त्वाऽन्यत्र फलं निजम् ।  
जायन्ते मानुषे लोके सश्रीके सज्जनास्पदे ॥  
ये च मध्यमधर्माणो मृतिमोहादनन्तरम् ।  
ते त्र्योमवायुवलिताः प्रयान्त्योषधिपल्लवम् ॥  
तत्र चारुफलं मुक्त्वा प्रविश्य हृदयं नृणाम् ।  
रेतसामधितिष्ठन्ति गर्भे जातिकमोचिते ॥

Death, according to Vasiṣṭha, as also according to Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, does not undo the spiritual progress made during the earthly life by an individual. It is retained in the individual in the form of a tendency or predisposition which enables the individual to re-learn easily and quickly what was achieved during the previous life. "The sins of those who are on the path of Self-realization become powerless in proportion to their progress. But to reap the fruits of their virtues, they experience, after their death, that they are enjoying a heavenly life in *vimānas* (heavenly cars), in the cities of the *Loka-pālas* (gods looking after the management of the various worlds), in the gardens and bowers of the *Sumeru* mountain, in company with heavenly damsels, etc. (VIa, 126, 47-49.) The force of their virtues being spent up in heavenly enjoyments, they are again born in the families of *yogins* (those who are on the path of Self-realization). Having been born in the families of the pure and prosperous, good and virtuous, they retain a tendency towards Self-realization, and begin to take to the path. (VIa, 126, 49-50.) Having quite easily revived what was learnt in the previous earthly life, they continue further (on the path)." (VIa, 126, 51.)<sup>1</sup> "The process of gradual improvement," says Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan, "must go on after the death of our present bodies and it is reasonable to

<sup>1</sup> योगभूमिकयोत्क्रान्तजीवितस्य शरीरिणः ॥

भूमिकाशानुसारेण क्षीयते पूर्वदुष्कृतम् ।

ततः सुरविमानेषु लोकपालपुरेषु च ॥

मेरूपवनकुञ्जेषु रमते रमणीसखः ।

ततः सुकृतसंभारे दुष्कृते च पुरा कृते ॥

भोगजाले परिक्षीणे जायन्ते योगिनो मुनि ।



assume that this life is followed by others like it". . . . (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 297.) "The kind of life after death cannot be completely different from the present one." (*Ibid.*, p. 292.) "Life after death is continuous with our present existence." (*Ibid.*, p. 299.) "We are reborn in families where the qualities we possess and seek to embody are well-developed." (*Ibid.*, p. 296.)

The round of death and rebirth is a universal law for every individual until he has attained Self-realization. "As birds pass from one tree to another, so also the souls bound by thousands of the fetters of desires and expectations have to pass from one body to another. (IV, 44, 26.) This experience of the cycles of births and deaths is continually undergone by the soul as long as the Self is not realized. (IV, 44, 28.) When the Self is known, and the craving for the false things of the world is given up, there will be no more any experience of a new birth after the death of this body." (IV, 44, 29.)<sup>1</sup>

Such will be the case of those who are called the *jīvan-muktas*, that is, those who having realized the

शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे गुप्ते गुणवतां सताम् ॥

अनित्वा योगमेवैते सेवन्ते योगवासिताः ।

तत्र प्राग्भावनाम्यस्तयोगभूमिक्रमं बुधाः ।

स्मृत्वा परिपतन्त्युच्चैर्हृत्तरं भूमिकाक्रमम् ॥

<sup>1</sup> आशापाशशताब्द्धा वासनाभावधारिणः ।

कायात्कायमुपायान्ति वृक्षाद् वृक्षमिवाण्डजाः ॥

तावद्भवन्ति संसारे वारिण्यावर्त्तराशयः ।

यावन्मूढा न पश्यन्ति स्वमात्मानमनिन्दितम् ॥

दृष्ट्वाऽऽत्मानमसत्पत्तत्वा सत्यामासाद्य संविदम् ।

कालेन पदमागत्य जायन्ते नेह ते पुनः ॥

nature of the Self, have given up desires and expectations and are living a life of liberation from the bondage of the world as long as their physical bodies do not drop. They are no longer bound to experience another birth, because all the force of their previous desires is spent up and retarded by Self-knowledge. "After the death of their physical bodies there is no other birth in their case. This kind of existence when there is no more undergoing any experience of an objective world is called *videha-mukti*, i.e., disembodied state of Liberation. (V, 42, 13.) The will (*vāsanā*) or desire of the liberated man while he is living does not fructify into a new world-experience like a fried seed. (V, 42, 14.) As a gust of wind loses itself in air, so also the individuality of a liberated man loses itself in a formless experience after the physical body is destroyed by death. (III, 9, 14.) This experience is the Absolute Reality which is beyond the categories of being and non-being, far and near, self and not-self." (III, 9, 15.)<sup>1</sup>

Even in the case of those who are not liberated, there is no death for the Real Self. The Self as such is always above birth or death, for it is presupposed to be existing behind all kinds of experience, whether it is

सैव देहक्षये राम पुनर्जन्मविवर्जिता ।  
 विदेहमुक्ता प्रोक्ता तत्स्था नायान्ति दृश्यताम् ॥  
 भृष्टबीजोपमा भूयो जन्माङ्कुरविवर्जिता ।  
 हृदि जीवद्भिमुक्तानां शुद्धा भवति वासना ॥  
 जीवन्मुक्तपदं त्यक्त्वा देहे कालवशीकृते ।  
 विशत्यदेहमुक्तत्वं पवनोऽस्पन्दतामिव ॥  
 विदेहमुक्तो नोदेति नास्तमेति न शाम्यति ।  
 न सनासन्न दूरस्थो न चाहं न च नेतरः ॥

of death or of birth. Death and birth are changes within experience. Death only brings the experience of a particular body to a close, and birth is the name of the experience of a new body. "The Consciousness of a person is neither born nor dead. It only experiences these states as in a dream. (III, 54, 67.) The soul as pure consciousness never comes to an end. (III, 54, 68.) It never dies, and, in spite of the death of millions of the bodies, it ever continues to be the same. (III, 54, 69.) The phenomena of birth and death mean only change and variety in the desires and interests of the individual. (III, 54, 71.) Deaths and births are as it were merely knots and joints in the long creeper of Consciousness (III, 54, 66), which as such never dies or is reborn." (III, 55, 3.)<sup>1</sup>

Although death and rebirth are admitted by Vasiṣṭha as inevitable facts of finite existence, because they are consequent upon the changes in our desires and interests, yet it depends upon our own actions and mode of living when one will have to die. The period of time of one's lives is determined by our acts. We are not helpless toys in the hands of cruel death as is usually supposed to be the case. "The particular age

<sup>1</sup> न जायते न म्रियते चेतनः पुरुषः कश्चित् ।  
 स्वप्नसंभ्रमवद्भ्रान्तमेतत्पश्यति केवलम् ॥  
 पुरुषश्चेतनामात्रं स कदा केव नश्यति ।  
 म्रियन्ते देहलक्षाणि चेतनं स्थितमक्षयम् ॥  
 वासनामात्रवैचित्र्यं यज्जीवोऽनुभवेत्स्वयम् ।  
 तस्यैव जीवमरणे नामनी परिकल्पिते ॥  
 यथा लतायाः पर्वाणि दीर्घाया मध्यमव्यतः ।  
 तथा चेतनसत्ताया जन्मानि मरणानि च ।  
 शुद्धं हि चेतनं नित्यं नोदेति न च शाम्यति ॥



in which one is living, the climate (*desa*), the quality of food (*dravya*) the profession and the purity or impurity of one's actions determine the length or shortness of our life. (III, 54, 29.) The increase, decrease or averageness of one's life depends on those of one's virtuous acts. (III, 54, 30.) He lives up to the age mentioned in the *Sastras* who ever remains firm in the dutiful conduct prescribed by the *Sastras*. (III, 54, 32.) Death does not by itself kill anybody, it is his own actions that kill one. (III, 2, 10.)<sup>1</sup>

There is thus a possibility of living an abnormally long life according to Vasistha, if one could have control over one's desires and conduct. He thinks that death does not easily kill the person who does not wear on his bosom the necklace of vicious desires (VIa, 23, 5); whose heart is not broken by sorrows; whose breast is not sawed by the friction of sighs; whose body is not eaten away by worries (VIa, 23, 6); who is not beset with cares and anxieties (VIa, 23, 7); whose heart is not vitiated by the poison of attachment and aversion; who does not foster the snake of avarice (VIa, 23, 8); whose discriminative power is not dried up by the fire of anger (VIa, 23, 9); whom the fiery passion of sexuality does not trouble (VIa, 23, 10);

‘देशकालक्रियाद्रव्यशुद्धयशुद्धी स्वकर्मणाम् ।

न्यूनत्वे चाधिकत्वे च नृणां कारणमायुषः ॥

स्वकर्मघर्मे हसति हसत्यायुर्नृणामिह ।

वृद्धे वृद्धिमुपायाति सममेव भवेत्समे ॥

यो यथाशास्त्रमारब्धं स्वधर्ममनुतिष्ठति ।

भाजनं भवति श्रीमान्स यथाशास्त्रमायुषः ॥

मृत्यो न किञ्चिच्छतस्त्वमेको मारयितुं बलात् ।

मारणीयस्य कर्माणि तत्कर्तुणीति नेतरत् ॥

who has found peace in the Supreme Self (VIa, 23, 11); and whose mind is free from constant changes of desire for this or that object. (VIa, 23, 12.)<sup>1</sup> (Summary translation of the verses bearing on the subject.)

<sup>1</sup> दोषमुक्ताफलप्रीता वासनातन्तुसंततिः ।  
 हृदि न ग्रथिता यस्य मृत्युस्तं न जिघांसति ॥  
 निःश्वासवृक्षक्रकचाः सर्वदेहलताधुणाः ।  
 आघयो यं न भिन्दन्ति मृत्युस्तं न जिघांसति ॥  
 शरीरतरुसर्पौवाञ्छिन्तापितशिरःफणाः ।  
 आशा यं न दहन्त्यन्तमृत्युस्तं न जिघांसति ॥  
 रामद्वेषविषाधुरः स्वमनोविलमन्दिरः ।  
 लोभव्यालो न शुद्धे यं मृत्युस्तं न जिघांसति ॥  
 पीताशेषविवेकाम्बुः शरीराम्भोधिवाडवः ।  
 न निर्दहति यं कोपस्तं मृत्युर्न जिघांसति ॥  
 यन्त्रं तिलानां कठिनं राशिमुग्रमिवाकुलम् ।  
 यं पीडयति नानङ्गस्तं मृत्युर्न जिघांसति ॥  
 एकस्मिन्निर्मले येन पदे परमपावने ।  
 संश्रिता चित्तविश्रान्तिस्तं मृत्युर्न जिघांसति ॥  
 वपुःखण्डाभिपतितं शम्भामृगमिवोदितम् ।  
 न चञ्चलं मनो यस्य तं मृत्युर्न जिघांसति ॥

## CHAPTER IX

### THE COSMIC MIND (BRAHMĀ)

WE have already pointed out that Vasiṣṭha believes in the existence of a Cosmic Mind which imagines the Cosmos in the same way as individual minds imagine their own dream-worlds. Brahmā and Prajā-pati are the two chief names given by him to the Cosmic Mind. (Compare Chapter IV of the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, where the *Mahat* of *Sāṃkhya* is identified with Brahmā or Īśvara.) In this chapter we propose to learn what Vasiṣṭha has said about Brahmā. To avoid confusion we shall use the word Brahman for the Absolute Reality instead of Brahma which might be confused with Brahmā.

The world (*jagat*) is the imagination of Brahmā. It was imagined by him at the commencement of the present round of manifestation, and continues to exist in his mind. "At the commencement of creation, Prajā-pati (the Lord of creatures) was evolved in the same manner as a dream personality emerges. He continues to be even now. (III, 55, 47.) The world is the imagination of this first Evolute. As he imagines, so it becomes." (VIb, 186, 65.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सर्गादौ स्वप्नपुरुषन्यायेनादिप्रजापतिः ।

यथा स्फुटं प्रकचितस्तथाऽद्यापि स्थिता स्थितिः ॥

संकल्पयति यन्नाम प्रथमोऽसौ प्रजापतिः ।

तत्तदेवाशु भवति तस्येदं कल्पनं जगत् ॥



The nature of Brahmā is mind. The essential characteristic of the mind is imagination (*samkalpanam*). "The quality of creating belongs to the mind whose nature is imagination. (III, 3, 34.) The nature of Brahmā is the mind." (III, 3, 35.)<sup>1</sup> (Compare the *Bhagavata*, III, 16, 21.) "Imagination is the best name", writes Mackenzie similarly, "for the central activity by which the creative work may be supposed to be initiated and carried through." (*The Hibbert Journal*, Jan. 1923, "The Idea of Creation".) Fawcett also thinks: "Ultimate Reality is best viewed as imaginal" (*Divine Imagining*).

How and why the Cosmic Mind emerges from the Absolute Reality is a very important problem and very difficult to answer. What Vasiṣṭha has said on this may be gathered from the following passages: "From the Infinite and Absolute Brahman, the Mind (Cosmic) originates, as a wave originates from a calm and undisturbed ocean. (III, 1, 15.) As movement (*spanda*) originates by itself in an undisturbed ocean, so does the Cause of the world originate of its own accord from the Absolute." (III, 100, 25.)<sup>2</sup> The origination of Brahmā is a stress, a creative impulse or vibratory movement in the Absolute. It is a sort of intensification of the Absolute in a portion of It as it were. "The Absolute Consciousness is intensified (*ghanatam eti*) in one portion of

<sup>1</sup> मन एव विरिञ्चत्वं तद्धि संकल्पनात्मकम् ।  
स्ववपुः स्फारतां नीत्वा मनसेदं वितन्पते ॥  
विरिञ्चो मनसो रूपं विरिञ्चस्य मनो वपुः ।

<sup>2</sup> मनः संपद्यते तेन महतः परमात्मनः ।  
मुस्थिरादस्थिराकारस्तद्भ्र इव वारिधेः ॥  
स्वयमक्षुब्धविमले यथा स्पन्दो महाम्भसि ।  
संसारकारणं जीवस्तथाऽयं परमात्मनि ॥

It. (IV, 42, 4.) The Absolute is agitated in a portion of itself. (IV, 42, 5.) As air by itself and in itself gives rise to winds, so by Its own power does the Absolute in Itself originate movement. (IV, 42, 6.) As a lamp by its own power sends its flame up, so does the Self originate movement in Itself. (IV, 42, 7.) The seed of the world (Brahmā) is the stress (*spanda*) of Consciousness." (III, 67, 9.)<sup>1</sup>

The Creative Impulse or movement which manifests itself in the form of a Creative agent or Brahmā is not due to any external cause operating on the Brahman, nor is it something which is alien to it. It is, according to Vasiṣṭha, in the very nature of the Absolute to manifest as Brahmā. "The *Jīva* (mind) is the *svābhāvika* (natural) vibration in the ether of Consciousness. It is of the form of a sudden thought (*samvedana*)." (III, 64, 9.)<sup>2</sup> It is by Itself, in Itself, through Its own Power, and in a mere sportful outflow, as it were, that the Absolute Reality gives rise to the first

<sup>1</sup> चित्स्पन्दवपुषस्तस्य स्पन्दस्तस्माच्चिदेव हि ।  
 प्रदेशाद्भनतामेति सौम्योऽब्धिश्चलनादिव ॥  
 अन्तरब्धेर्जलं यद्वत्स्पन्दास्पन्दवदीहते ।  
 सर्वशक्तिस्तथैकत्र गच्छति स्पन्दशक्तिताम् ॥  
 आत्मन्येवात्मना व्योम्नि यथा रसति मारुतः ।  
 तथेहात्माऽऽत्मशक्त्यैव स्वात्मन्येवैति लोलताम् ॥  
 स्वशिखास्पन्दशक्त्यैव दीपः सौम्यो यथोन्नतम् ।  
 एति तद्ब्रह्मसावात्मा तत्स्वे वपुषि वल्गति ॥  
 य एवानुभवात्माऽयं चित्स्पन्दोऽस्ति स एव हि ।  
 जीवकारणकर्माख्यो बीजमेतद्भि संसृते ॥

<sup>2</sup> शान्तत्वापगमेच्छस्य मनाक्संवेदनात्मकम् ।  
 स्वाभाविकं यत्स्फुरणं चिद्वयोन्नः सोऽङ्ग जीवकः ॥

Creative Mind. "The Absolute Consciousness which is not limited in time, space, etc., assumes a form (*vaṇuḥ*) limited in time and space by Its own Power and out of its own sport (*līla*). (IV, 44, 14-15.) The Self thinks Itself to be another as it were out of Its own accord (*svayam eva*). (III, 67, 79.) The Self of the whole Universe becomes Mind by thinking of Itself out of its own accord." (VIa, 114, 15.)<sup>1</sup> [Compare the *Bṛh. Up.* I, 4, 2, "*Īkṣāṃcakāra* (He looked round)" and the *Chānd. Up.*, VI, 22, "*Tad aikṣata* (That he saw)". Compare also the *Commentary* of Śaṅkara on the *Brahma-sūtras* (II, 1, 33) where *līla* and *svabhāva* theory is advocated.] The Brahman of Vasiṣṭha originates from the Absolute Brahman in very much the same way as the *Ālaya-vijñāna* whose function is similar to that of Brahman, originates from the *Tathatā*, according to Aśva-ghoṣa and other *Mahā-yāna* philosophers: "When the absolute soul assumes a relative aspect by its self-affirmation it is called the all-conserving mind (*alaya-vijñāna*)." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 131.) "The awakening of consciousness marks the first step towards the rising of this universe from the abyss of Suchness," (Suzuki: *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 118); "When Suchness, by its transcendental freedom of will, affirmed itself, it did so by negating itself to be conditioned by the principle of ignorance or individuation." (*Ibid.*, p. 117.) And "How and why have the waves of mentation been stirred up in the ocean of

<sup>1</sup> दिक्कालाद्यनविच्छिन्नमात्मतत्त्वं स्वशक्तिः ।

लीलयैव यदादत्तं दिक्कालकलितं वपुः ॥

स्वयमेवात्मनाऽऽत्माऽन्य इव चेत्यते ।

स्वयमेवात्मनैवात्मा शक्ति संकल्पनामिकाम् ।

यदा करोति स्फुरता स्पन्दशक्तिमिवान्लिः ॥



eternal tranquillity? Aśva-ghoṣa simply says, 'Spontaneously'." (*Ibid.*, p. 118.) Vasiṣṭha holds almost the same views.

This Creative Stress, although really identical and one with the Absolute and never other than It in reality, assumes a distinct and, as it were, a separate form for itself, like a wave rising on the ocean or a wind originating in air. "It imagines itself to be other than the Absolute, and becomes the other, (a thing by itself), through its imagination. (VIa, 33, 21.) As a man in anger becomes a different person in a moment, so Consciousness pregnated with imagination becomes another thing. (VIa, 30, 69.) Its otherness is just as the rays of the sun might be thought to be other than the sun (VIa, 114, 4); as an ornament of gold may be considered as something other than gold (VIa, 114, 5); as a wave of an ocean may be considered as other than the ocean. (VIa, 114, 7.) The creative power of the Absolute, when agitated a little, assumes a distinct reality of its own, although it is never other than the Absolute." (IV, 42, 11, 12.)<sup>1</sup> Fawcett similarly

<sup>1</sup> स्वयमन्यैवमस्मीति भावयित्वा स्वभावतः ।

अन्यतामिव संयाति स्वविकल्पात्मिकां स्वतः ॥

स एव हि पुमान्कोपाशयेहान्य इव क्षणात् ।

भवत्येवं विकल्पाङ्गा चित्स्वरूपाऽन्यतां गता ॥

आदित्यव्यतिरेकेण यो भावयति राघव ।

रश्मिजालमिदं होतृत्स्यान्यदिव भास्वतः ॥

फलकव्यतिरेकेण केयूरं येन भावितम् ।

केयूरमेव तत्तस्य न तस्य फलकं हि तत् ॥

सलिलव्यतिरेकेण तरङ्गो येन भावितः ।

तरङ्गबुद्ध्यैवेका स्थिता तस्य न वारिधिः ॥

किञ्चित्शुभितरूपा सा चिच्छक्तिश्चिन्महार्णवे ।

आत्मनोऽव्यतिरिक्तैव व्यतिरिक्तैव तिष्ठति ॥

says: "The world is a game which imagination plays with itself." (*The World as Imagination*, p. 230.)

The essential nature of this primal stress is imagination or consciring (*saṁkalpa*). It is the Consciring Power of the Absolute Consciousness assuming a definite form for activity. "The Mind is the form assumed by the consciring Power of the Omnipotent and Infinite Self. (III, 96, 3.) It always conscires." (IV, 42, 20.) What does this consciring mean? It is a tendency to create objects out of imagination. "The essence of *saṁkalpa* is the tendency towards objectivity (*cetyonmukhatvam*)." (IV, 54, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

What reason led to the rise of this Creative Impulse in the Absolute Reality is a very important question, and the answer of Vasiṣṭha differs from the views of almost all other schools of Indian Thought including even that of Sāṁkara. According to the *Naiyāyikas* the world begins to be re-evolved after a periodic involution of it, on account of the *karmas* of the individuals tending to fructify and so influencing the will of Īśvara to create again a world, out of the pre-existing material, in which they may be fructified. According to the *Maha-yāna* Buddhism the tendency to create illusory forms out of the mind is beginningless (*anādi-kāla-prapañca-vāsa*) (*Vide* Dāsa-gupta: *A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, 145), working from all eternity. Sāṁkara stands for a position which reconciles both these views. He makes the *Avidyā*, to which the creation is due, *anādi* (beginningless). Creation, according

<sup>1</sup> अनन्तस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य सर्वशक्तेर्महात्मनः ।

संकल्पशक्तिरचितं यद्रूपं तन्मनो विदुः ॥

संकल्पमनुधावन्ती प्रयाति कलनापदम् ॥

चित्तेष्वेत्योन्मुखत्वं यत्तत्संकल्पाङ्कुरं विदुः ॥

to him, is never a new creation. The present cycle of the world was caused by the ripening of the fruits of the actions of the individuals of the previous cycle; that again, by those of a still previous cycle, and so on *ad regressum*, for the Ignorance (*Avidyā*) which makes us experience the world is beginningless. The law of causal determination is thus extended backwards to infinity. (*Vide Śaṅkara's Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras*, II, 1, 35-36.) The Creator in such a doctrine of creation has hardly any freedom to create or not to create, for he is always determined by the *karmas* of the individuals to experience a new world. He is also probably a creature of the *karmas* either of his own performed in a previous *kalpa* or of the individuals for which he is to create a world. Vasiṣṭha, on the other hand, is a believer in creative freedom, as also in all other kinds of freedom. For him every creation is a new creation (*apūrva*) undetermined by any previous ones. There is no cause that determines the origination of the first impulse to creation. It is really a free and sportful activity (play). It might or might not have been so. Its commencement is only accidental (*kāka-tāṭhya-val*). It will be evident from the following quotations:

"The creative Power manifests itself within the Absolute without any cause (*nir-hetuka*). (VIa, II, 37.) The Svayaṁ-bhū (another name for the Cosmic Mind suggestive of its being self-caused) appears without any cause (*akāraṇam*), its own mind is its cause. (III, 3, 5.) Brahmā originates on account of the very nature (*sva-bhāva*) of the Absolute Consciousness. He becomes a cause of the world for the carrying out of which he creates a law of *karma* (cause and effect). (III, 64, 25.) The first Lord of creatures is said to be self-caused. He is causeless, because there existed no previous actions



(*karmas*). (III, 14, 7.) Even no previous memory is the cause of the appearance of Brahmā. (III, 13, 43.) There are no previous *karmas* (actions to fructify) of Him nor does He do any such actions now that may bind Him. (III, 2, 24.) In the Universal Involution (*Mahā-pralaya*) of the entire world, all the previous Creators (Brahmās) were merged in the Absolute Reality; so the new Creator cannot be said to be having any previous memory (III, 13, 42, 43), and therefore the present world is imagined by Him as quite new." (VIb, 195, 41.)<sup>1</sup>

Is Brahmā an embodied being like ourselves? Has he got physical consciousness and limitations like our own? Does he also perform actions like us and get bound therein? Such are some of the questions that may further arise about the Cosmic Mind. The answer of Vasiṣṭha to them is as follows: "Brahmā is the mind consisting of pure *samkalpa*. He is imagination alone. There is no physicality in Him. (III, 2, 54-55.) His body is only a subtle body with no physicality present in it. (III, 3, 6). All other beings of which

<sup>1</sup> शक्तिर्निर्हेतुकैवान्तः स्फुरति ॥

तस्मादकारणं भाति वा स्वचित्तैककारणम् ।

स्वकारणादनन्यात्मा स्वयंभूः स्वयमात्मवान् ॥

चित्स्वभावात्समायातं ब्रह्मत्वं सर्वकारणम् ।

संसृतौ कारणं पश्चात्कर्म निर्माय संस्थितम् ॥

आद्यः प्रजापतिः पूर्वं स्वयंभूरिति विश्रुतः ।

प्राक्तनानां स्वकार्याणामभावादप्यकारणः ॥

स्मृतिर्न प्राक्तनौ काचित्कारणं वा स्वयंभुवः ।

प्राक्तनानि न सन्त्यस्य कर्माण्यद्य करोति नो ॥

महाकल्पे विमुक्तत्वाद्ब्रह्मादीनामसंशयम् ।

स्मृतिर्न प्राक्तनौ काचित्कारणं वा स्वयंभुवः ॥

अपूर्वं एव स्वप्नोऽयं यद्वै सगौऽनुभूयते ॥

he is the cause have two bodies, but he who has no other cause of himself has only one body (mental)." (III, 3, 8-9).<sup>1</sup> He is not bound by the acts he performs, for they are free from the taint of the idea that they are his actions performed for some particular desired end. They come out as a natural flow from his essence. "What we think to be the actions of Brahmā are not such actions that bind him, for they are free from the idea of their being actions on his part." (III, 2, 25).<sup>2</sup>

This Brahmā is the imaginer of the world-dream. He is the source of all things herein. "From this first stress originates this creation like the creation of winds from air. (III, 3, 15.) The world is a *manorājyam* (an empire of fancy), a thought-construction of the Mind working in the form of Viriñci (another name for Brahmā)." (III, 3, 15, 33).<sup>3</sup> When Brahmā is mere

<sup>1</sup> संकल्पमात्रमेवैतन्मनो ब्रह्मेति कथ्यते ।

संकल्पाकाशपुरुषो नास्य पृथग्यादि विद्यते ॥

यथा चित्रकृदन्तःस्था निर्देहा भाति पुत्रिका ।

तथैव भासते ब्रह्मा चिदाकाशाच्छ्रज्जनम् ॥

आतिवाहिक एवासौ देहोऽस्त्यस्य स्वयंभुवः ।

न त्वाधिभौतिको राम देहोऽजस्योपपद्यते ॥

सर्वेषामेव देहो द्वौ भूतानां कारणात्मनाम् ।

अजस्य कारणाभावादेक एवातिवाहिकः ॥

सर्वासां भूतजातीनामेकोऽजः कारणं परम् ।

अजस्य कारणं नास्ति तेनासावेकदेहवान् ॥

प्राणस्पन्दोऽस्य यत्कर्म लक्ष्यते चास्मदादिभिः ।

दृश्यतेऽस्माभिरेवं तत्र त्वस्यास्त्यत्र कर्मघीः ॥

<sup>2</sup> अस्मात्पूर्वात्प्रतिस्पन्दादनन्यैतत्स्वरूपिणी ।

इयं प्रविसृता सृष्टिः स्पन्दसृष्टिरिवानिलात् ॥

मनोनाम्नो मनुष्यस्य विरिञ्च्याकाशधारिणः ।

मनोराज्यं जगदिति सत्यरूपमिव स्थितम् ॥

mind (*mano-mātram*), the world created by him cannot but ultimately be mental or ideal. The physicality of the world is only an illusion relative to our limited vision. "As Brahmā is merely mind without the least touch of materiality in him, so is also the world imagined by him merely thought. (III, 3, 25.) For, what is thought by the mind cannot be essentially different in the nature from thought." (III, 66, 11.)<sup>1</sup>

Vasiṣṭha's conception of Brahmā is, it may also be noted here, very much similar to that of the Logos of the Theosophists. Logos, according to them, is "The embodiment of 'Thought' or 'Idea' of the Cosmos as it exists in the 'mind' of the Godhead; and as such He is the Cosmos in its Wholeness and Completeness." (*Rational Mysticism*). It is "the Divine Potency of all that is or can be in that particular Universe. The unfolding of that *Idea*, or the manifestation of it in Consciousness through the modes of time and space, constitutes the process which we know as Evolution." (Kingsland: *The Physics of the Secret Doctrine*, p. 47.)

<sup>1</sup> मनोमात्रं यदा ब्रह्मा न पृथग्व्यादिमयात्मकः ।

मनोमात्रमतो विश्वं यद्यजातं तदेव हि ॥

यच्चेत्यते तदितरद्वयतिरिक्तं चित्तोऽस्ति न ॥



## CHAPTER X

### THE CREATIVE POWER OF THE ABSOLUTE

BRAHMĀ, as we have already learnt in the last chapter, is a definite form assumed by the Creative Power of the Brahman. Here we propose to learn how Vasiṣṭha thinks of this Power.

The Monists of the extreme type like the Eliatics of Ancient Greece have found it very difficult to explain how plurality and change perceived in the universe could be related to and could originate from the Unity presupposed by Reason to exist behind the universe. Owing to the logical difficulty as to how the Changeless One postulated by thought could change and be many, they have relegated the later aspect of the world to the sphere of illusion. In India, Śaṅkara also seems to have done likewise. (*Vide* Śaṅkara's *Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras*, II, 1, 14.) Deussen puts his view as such: "In reality (*paramārthataḥ*) there is nothing else besides the Brahman alone. If we imagine we perceive a transformation (*vikāra*) of Him into the world, a division (*bheda*) of Him into a plurality of individual souls, this depends on *Avidyā* (ignorance)." (Deussen: *The System of the Vedānta*, p. 302.) (N.B. This interpretation of Śaṅkara's philosophy is criticized by Kōkilesvara Śāstri in his *Introduction to Advaita Philosophy*, pp. 10-15.) The main difficulty of such a

pure Monistic hypothesis is that it does not explain anything, and so it looks like a gratuitous hypothesis. For, we postulate Unity only to understand the world of plurality and change, and if our inability to connect the world of plurality and change with, or derive it from, the changeless pure and abstract unity makes us finish our trouble by thinking the world to be "an illusion" (due to ignorance), and the pure One alone to be in reality, we defeat our own purpose. We are in that case obsessed and deceived by our own idol of a unity that explains nothing. For to call a thing an illusion and to think it to be a sufficient explanation is not a good specimen of philosophical thinking. Illusion itself is a fact and therefore has to be explained and interpreted. It has been rightly pointed out by a modern writer: "If . . . we attempt to write off the appearance of difference as mere Illusion due to partial vision, the difficulty remains. For the task of making a *real* unity generate an *apparent* diversity is not less than that of accounting for its generation of a real diversity. Unity in fact can no more account for error than for diversity. (Joan: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, p. 65.) How then are the things and occurrences of the world to be derived from the Unity behind and prior to all, as has been presupposed by Vasiṣṭha as well as by the *Upaniṣads*? Deussen thinks that no answer has been given to such a question in the school of Sāṃkhya. In continuation of the above quoted passage (from Deussen) he writes again: "But how does this happen? How do we manage to deceive ourselves into seeing a transformation and plurality, where in reality the Brahman alone is?—On this question our authors give no information." (Deussen: *The System of Vedānta*,

p. 392.) This difficulty in the school of Sāṃkara is to a great extent responsible for the rise of the other schools in the arena of the *Vedānta* philosophy after Sāṃkara. A similar difficulty is pointed out by Suzuki to exist in the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhism from which Sāṃkara's school seems to have borrowed the concept of Ignorance (*Avidyā*): "As to the question how and why this negative principle of ignorance came to assert itself in the body of Suchness, we are at a loss where to find an authoritative and definite answer to it." (Suzuki: *Outline of Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 116.) We shall point out here how Vasiṣṭha has tried to answer this question.

The plurality and change of the world are, according to Vasiṣṭha, aspects, of the Consciring activity of the Cosmic Mind who imagines the world as a free play of his will. But Brahṃā would not have been able to imagine the world, had not everything of the world existed already in a potential form in the Absolute Reality of which Brahṃā is only a partial manifestation for Creative activity. For, as it has been said, "Diversity and plurality can only develop out of unity in virtue of some initial potentiality for diversity and plurality latent in the unity." (Joad: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, p. 65.) As all things are thoughts, looked at from a higher stage, so are all thoughts, according to Vasiṣṭha, so many *saktis*, forces, potencies, or pulses residing unified in the Absolute. There is no end to the number of such forces or potencies existing in the Brahman. In fact all possible things are there potentially. It is therefore called *sarva-sakti* (having potentiality for everything). "The Lord of all, the Brahman, is endowed with all possible potencies which manifest themselves (as things) whenever so



willed. (III, 67, 2.) The Absolute is the inexhaustible fulness of all that is. There is nothing which it has not the power to manifest. (III, 100, 5.) There is no end to the *saktis* (potencies) of the Absolute, such as the potency to knowledge, potency of action, potency of movement, etc. (VIa, 37, 16.) Its power of consciousness is manifested in the (organized) bodies, that of movement in winds, and that of inertness in stone (III, 100, 7); of liquidity in water, of heat in fire, of emptiness in sky, of being in objects (III, 100, 8); of all-inclusiveness in space, of destruction in the phenomena of decay, of sorrow in the miserable (III, 100, 9); of joy in the happy, of courage in the warrior, of creation in the world, of withdrawal of all powers in the experience of the absence of the world at the time of the end of a *kalpa*." (III, 100, 10.)<sup>1</sup>

One of the innumerable powers of the Absolute is the Creative Power, which he calls the *Spanda-sakti*

१ समस्तशक्तिर्वचितं ब्रह्म सर्वेश्वरं सदा ।  
ययैव शक्त्या स्फुरति प्राप्तां तामेव पश्यति ॥  
सर्वशक्तिं परं ब्रह्म नित्यमापूर्णमव्ययम् ।  
न तदस्ति न तस्मिन्पृथिव्यते विततात्मनि ॥  
ज्ञानशक्तिः क्रियाशक्तिः कर्तृताऽकर्तृताऽपि च ।  
इत्यादिकानां शक्तीनामन्तो नास्ति शिवात्मनः ॥  
चिच्छक्तिर्ब्रह्मणो राम शरीरेष्वभिदृश्यते ।  
स्पन्दशक्तिश्च वातेषु जडशक्तिस्तथोपले ॥  
द्रवशक्तिस्तथाऽम्भःसु तेजःशक्तिस्तथाऽनले ।  
शून्यशक्तिस्तथाऽऽकाशे भावशक्तिर्भवस्थितौ ॥  
ब्रह्मणः सर्वशक्तिर्हि दृश्यते दशदिग्गता ।  
नाशशक्तिर्विनाशेषु शोकशक्तिश्च शोकेषु ॥  
आनन्दशक्तिर्मुदिते वीर्यशक्तिस्तथा भटे ।  
सर्गेषु सर्गशक्तिश्च कल्पान्ते सर्वशक्तिता ॥

(the power of movement). The rise of *Brahmā* and consequently of the world is due to the *Spanda-sakti* of the Absolute being actually in operation. It is called by various names, such as the *Saṃkalpa-sakti*, the Divine Will, the *Jagan-māyā*, *Prakṛti*, etc. "As the imaginative power of a man spreads the world of his fancy out, so does the Creative Power of the Absolute spread out this objective world. (VIb, 84, 6.) It is on account of this Power being inherent in the Absolute that every conscious centre is creative. (VIb, 83, 16.) This Creative Power is called *Prakṛti*, Divine Will of *Śiva*, and the *Māyā* of the world." (VIb, 85, 14.)<sup>1</sup> That the material world may be a manifestation of *Spanda-sakti* or Energy is now-a-days being accepted by Science, as will appear from the following quotations: "Matter is turning out to be one of the forms of energy, a newly discovered form, discovered largely through the genius of Einstein." (Lodge: *Making of Man*, p. 24.) "Inert matter, immobility, is purely an appearance; it is composed of two movements. It is the relation of our movement to the other movements." (Wilton Carr: *The Philosophy of Change*, p. 30.) "Look at any piece of gross matter that you will, at any fragment of stone or metal. To the outer vision it is apparently dead, inert, motionless. Not so, however, in the light of what science now teaches us. Its very stability, its very apparent motionlessness, is due to the intensity of its

<sup>1</sup> स्पन्दशक्तिस्तदिच्छेदं दृश्याभासं तनोति सा ।  
 साकारस्य नरस्येच्छा यथा वै कल्पनापुरम् ॥  
 यन्नाम चेतनं यत्र तदवश्यं स्वभावतः ।  
 स्पन्दधर्मि भवत्येव वस्तुता हि स्वभावजा ॥  
 सा राम प्रकृतिः प्रोक्ता शिवेच्छा पारमेश्वरी ।  
 जगन्मायेति विख्याता स्पन्दशक्तिरकृत्रिमा ॥

motion. It is motion alone which makes it a *thing*, which gives it mass or inertia, extension in space, and every other quality which we are in any way able to recognize. The atom does not exist apart from motion or force; there is no such thing as a physical particle, the "massy, hard, impenetrable" particle of the physics of the last century." (Kingsland: *The Physics of the Secret Doctrine*, p. 106.)

The Absolute and Ultimate Reality is thus, according to Vasiṣṭha, not an abstract Unity, pure and simple consciousness that is postulated by the *Advaita Vedāntists* of the extreme type. It is an omnipotent Being, having Power to Create in addition to other innumerable powers. That the Creative Power belongs to the Ultimate Brahman is probably also the view of some of the *Upaniṣads* (See *The Sveta. Up.*, IV, 10); of the author of the *Brahma-sūtras*, who holds that "the power of creation belongs to the pure, stainless Brahman, even as heat belongs to fire" (I, 3, 1); and of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. (IV, 5.) This is also the opinion of some of the Western Philosophers. Paulsen, for example, writes: "Reality as a whole is free from external compulsion; its motion can be explained as a spontaneous movement from within." (Paulsen: *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 233.) Fawcett also thinks: "The Consciousness or rather Conscious-ing in question is not merely awareness that shines ideally in its own light; it is also the *active Continuum* that *sustains* and *creates* all the minor sentient and all the contents of which it is aware." (Fawcett: *Divine Imagining*.)

The *Prakṛti*, the Root-substance of all forms of the objective world is, therefore, according to Vasiṣṭha, not a second reality as the *Sāṃkhya* school of Indian Philosophy would believe it to be. It is a Force, a Power



of Consciousness, and as such it ever resides in the Self, and comes out of It, as it were, and manifests itself as the root of all objects of the world, when a world is manifested. "The multiplicity of the world originates when the creative power of the Absolute is manifested (*udita*). (III, 96, 70.) As the saliva of a spider gets solidified in a web, so also the Absolute Joy appears solidified in the manifold objects of the world. (III, 67, 73.) The *Prakṛti* originates from the Brahman, the *Puruṣa*, which is the eternally illuminating Consciousness, as a non-living web originates from a living spider." (III, 96, 71.)<sup>1</sup> Aśva-ghoṣa holds a similar view with regard to the rise of "Ignorance" from "Suchness" which is the ultimate Reality for him. Suzuki writes: "Ignorance or Nescience is defined by Aśva-ghoṣa as a spark of consciousness that spontaneously flashes from the unfathomable depth of Suchness." (Suzuki: *Outline of Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 118.) The three *guṇas* of the *Prakṛti* are, according to Vasiṣṭha, the three grades of the manifestation of It. "The *Prakṛti* is imagined in three forms,—the *sūkṣma* (subtle), the *madhyama* (midway between the subtle and the gross), and the *sthūla* (gross). (VIa, 9, 4.) It continues to exist in these three forms, which are called *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*." (VIa, 9, 5.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यदैव खलु शुद्धाया मनागपि हि संविदः ।  
जडेव शक्तिरुदिता तदा वैचित्र्यमागतम् ॥  
भावदाढ्यात्मकं मिथ्या ब्रह्मानन्दो विभाज्यते ।  
आत्मेव कोशकारेण लालादाढ्यात्मकं यथा ॥  
ऊर्णनाभाश्च तन्तुर्जायते चेतनाजडः ।  
नित्यास्पृष्टात्पुरुषाद्ब्रह्मणः प्रकृतिस्तथा ॥

<sup>2</sup> सूक्ष्मा मध्या तथा स्थूला चेति सा कल्प्यते त्रिधा ।  
तिष्ठत्येतास्त्रयस्थासु भेदतः कल्प्यते त्रिधा ॥

Sir John Woodroffe, who has made a thorough study of the *Sakta* school of Indian Philosophy, writes in one of his volumes in the *World as Power* Series about the relation of the Creative Power, *Sakti*, and the Absolute Consciousness, held in the *Sakta* School: "Siva and Sakti are not two independent Realities but one Reality in twin aspects, namely static and kinetic . . . Sakti or Power is that which, in itself unchangeable, produces out of itself as Material Cause the world of change. Common language speaks of the Power of Siva, but strictly Power or Sakti is Siva. When the one Reality or the Brahman is regarded as the Changeless Consciousness it is called Siva; when it is regarded as the Power of Consciousness or Consciousness-Power which projects the universe from out of itself, it is called Sakti. It is a fundamental doctrine that there is no Siva without Sakti, nor Sakti without Siva . . . Sakti is only the active power of actionless Consciousness (Siva)." (*The World as Power, Reality*, pp. 81-82.) Vasiṣṭha has also conceived the relation of the *Sakti* to the Absolute Consciousness exactly in the same way, using the same terms as the *Sakta* school and that of Kashmir Śaivism do. "The Creative Power and the Pure Consciousness are identical (*ekātma*) in essence, as wind and air, and as heat and fire are. (VIb 84, 3.)<sup>1</sup> This power of movement which is of the form of the mind, is not other than That. (VIb, 84, 2.) Siva is called as such only in association with the Sakti. (VIb, 84, 26.) Siva is that state of Sakti when It returns back to itself. (VIb, 4, 26-27.) The Absolute never exists without the Sakti,

<sup>1</sup> यथैकं पवनस्पन्दमेकमौष्ण्यानलौ यथा ।

चिन्मात्रं स्पन्दशक्तिश्च तथैवैकात्म सर्वदा ॥

as gold never exists without a form (Vib, 82, 6), as a chilly does not exist without its pungency (Vib, 82, 7), as the juice of sugar does not exist without its sweetness. (Vib, 82, 9.) Consciousness never exists without the vibratory force. (Vib, 83, 14.) Siva, the Peaceful Absolute, is said to be beyond the *Prakṛti*. (Vib, 85, 15.) The *Prakṛti*, which is the Creative Divine Will, continues to be in motion as long as it does not direct its attention towards the ever satisfied Siva (Compare the view of *Sāṃkhya*). (Vib, 85, 16-17.) If It accidentally happens to be in touch with (directed towards), the Quiescent Siva, It becomes identical with That (*tan-mayī*), for ultimately It is also Pure Consciousness (*Samvīn-mātra*). (Vib, 85, 18.) Having touched the *Puruṣa* (Siva), the *Prakṛti* ceases to be *Prakṛti* and then becomes one with That like a river fallen into an ocean." (Vib, 85, 19.) The philosophers of

अनन्यां तस्य तां विद्धि स्पन्दशक्ति मनोमयीम् ॥  
 व्यावृत्त्यैव तथैवास्ते शिव इत्युच्यते तदा ।  
 चितिशक्तेः क्रियादेव्याः प्रतिस्थानं यदात्मनि ॥  
 यथा भूतस्थितेरेव तदेव शिव उच्यते ॥  
 चेतनत्वात्तथा भूतस्वभावविभवाद्भूते ।  
 स्थातुं न युज्यते तस्य यथा हेम्ना निराकृति ॥  
 कथमास्तां वद प्राज्ञ मरिचं तिक्ततां विना ॥  
 विना तिष्ठति माधुर्यं कथयेक्षुरसः कथम् ॥  
 चेतनं चेतनाधातोः किञ्चित्संस्पन्दनं विना ।  
 क्वचित्स्थातुं न शक्नोति वस्त्ववस्तुतया यथा ॥  
 स परः प्रकृतेः प्रोक्तः पुरुषः पवनाकृतिः ।  
 शिवरूपधरः शान्तः शरदाकाशशान्तिमान् ॥  
 भ्रमति प्रकृतिस्तावत्संसारे भ्रमरूपिणी ।  
 स्पन्दमात्रात्मिका सेच्छा चिच्छक्तिः पारमेश्वरी ॥  
 यावन्न पश्यति शिवं नित्यतृप्तमनामयम् ॥



the *Advaita* school, it may be mentioned here, found it logically difficult to speak of any relation between *Māyā* and the Brahman. Their difficulties are summed up by Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan as follows: "This *Māyā* is a feature of the central reality, neither identical with nor different from it. To give it an independent place would be to accept a fundamental dualism. It is wrong to trace back to the eternal the schism of which we are conscious in the world of experience . . . If *Māyā* exists, it will constitute a limit to the Brahman; if it does not exist, even the appearance of the world cannot be accounted for . . . It is real enough to produce the world and not real enough to constitute a limit to the Brahman." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, 570-571.)

Thus, according to Vasiṣṭha, the world is the display or manifestation of the Dynamic aspect of the One Reality which is Consciousness and which has the potency within Itself to manifest everything that is experienced in the universe, as well as to withdraw it within Itself. The Ancient name of this Reality is the Brahman (from the root Bṛh=to grow or expand).

संविन्मात्रैकधर्मित्वात्काकतालीययोगतः ॥  
 संविदेवी शिवं स्पृष्ट्वा तन्मयीव भवत्यलम् ॥  
 प्रकृतिः पुरुषं स्पृष्ट्वा प्रकृतित्वं समुज्जाति ।  
 तदन्तरेकतां गत्वा नदीरूपमिवाणवे ॥

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ABSOLUTE REALITY (PARAM BRAHMA)

WE shall now learn how Vasiṣṭha conceives the Absolute Reality in which all the things of the world arise, exist and merge, like waves in an ocean, or winds in the air.

The Brahman, according to Vasiṣṭha, is "That in which everything exists, from which everything originates, which is in everything, which pervades everything, which is the whole of everything and which is spread all around and in everything." (VIb, 184, 46; VIb, 14, 8.)<sup>1</sup> It is the Primordial Substance of which Kingsland says: "From It all things proceed, to It all things return, in that Cosmic MOTION which is the Ceaseless Breath of the Eternal BEING. From It all things proceed, yet they never *are* other than It, either in outward natural form or in inner energizing power." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 86.)

It is evident that such all-inclusive Reality cannot be characterized by any definite conception and cannot be described by any term, or number of terms, for

<sup>1</sup> यस्मिन्सर्वं यतः सर्वं यत्सर्वं सर्वतश्च यत् ।

सर्वं सर्वतया सर्वं तत्सर्वं सर्वदा स्थितम् ॥

सर्वशक्ति परं ब्रह्म सर्ववस्तुमयं ततम् ।

सर्वदा सर्वथा सर्वं सर्वैः सर्वत्र सर्वगम् ॥

all our terms are relative and definitive in their meaning, whereas the Absolute is the Infinite Whole within the womb of which everything denoted by our terms exists. It is, in Itself, that which may be denoted by any term as well as its opposite (*pratiyogin*), so every term loses its meaning in It, because every term denotes only some particular thing and not its other or opposite. So Vasiṣṭha says: "It is neither spirit nor matter; neither being nor non-being; neither ego nor non-ego; neither one nor many (V, 72, 41); neither far nor near; neither existent nor non-existent; neither obtainable nor non-obtainable; neither parts nor the whole; neither a substance nor non-substance; and neither the five elements nor objects made of them (V, 72, 42-43);<sup>1</sup> It cannot, therefore, be described, named or expressed in language, and so Its nature cannot be taught to any body. "It is unspeakable, inexpressible, unnamable, and Its nature is not an object of description, for It is not an object of the senses." (VIb, 52, 27; VIb, 31, 37.)<sup>2</sup> Compare *Taitt. Upa.*, II, 4: "From Him all words turn back with thoughts, not finding Him." But at the same time Vasiṣṭha does not think, like Herbert Spencer, that the Ultimate Reality is unknowable. He believes that although the Absolute cannot be described and discussed because It is beyond all

१ न चेतनो न च जडो न चैवासन्न सन्मयः ।  
 नाहं नान्यो न चैवैको नानेको नाप्यनेकवान् ॥  
 नाम्याशस्थो न दूरस्थो नैवास्ति न च नास्ति च ।  
 न प्राप्यो नाति चाप्राप्यो न वा सर्वो न सर्वगः ॥  
 न पदार्थो नापदार्थो न पञ्चात्मा न पञ्च च ॥

२ अवाच्यमनभिव्यक्तमतीन्द्रियमनामकम् ॥  
 स्वरूपं नोपदेशस्य विषयो विदुषो हि तत् ॥



characteristics, yet It is not absolutely unknowable, for, It is revealed in our own Experience. (VIb, 195, 69.)<sup>1</sup>

Vasiṣṭha dilates further on the inapplicability of our terms to the Absolute thus:

We cannot say whether the Absolute is *one or many* (*ekam vā anekam vā*). "Unity and duality imply each other. One cannot exist without the other. Both are conceptions within the Absolute, and as such unreal from the Absolute point of view. (VIa, 33, 4-5.) The multiplicity (of the world) is existing in the Absolute in such a unified manner as the variety of the colours of a peacock are unified in the (homogeneous) liquid of the egg of a peacock." (VIa, 47, 31-32.)<sup>2</sup> Bradley similarly thinks: "Unity in its more proper sense, is known as contradistinguished from plurality. Unity, therefore, as an aspect over against and defined by another aspect, is itself, but appearance. And in this sense the Real, it is clear, cannot be properly called one. It is possible, however, to use unity with a different meaning." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, Chap. XXVII.) And it is in a different sense that Vasiṣṭha and Bradley call the Absolute one.

We cannot likewise say whether the Brahman is *Being or Non-being*. "The Absolute, which is Consciousness, cannot, then, be called Being or Non-being.

<sup>1</sup> प्रत्यक्षादिप्रमाणानां यदगम्यमचिह्नितम् ।

स्वानुभूतिभवं ब्रह्म वादैस्तद्व्युत्पद्यते कथम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> सति द्वित्वे किलैकं स्यात्सत्येकत्वे द्विरूपता ।

कले द्वे अपि चिद्रूपे चिद्रूपत्वान्तदप्यसत् ॥

एकामावादभावोऽत्र एकत्वद्वित्वयोर्द्वयोः ।

एकं विना न द्वितीयं न द्वितीयं विनैकता ॥

सनानातोऽप्यनानातो यथाऽण्डरसवर्हिणः ॥

अद्वैतद्वैतसत्त्वात्मा तथा ब्रह्मजगद्भ्रमः ॥

(VIb, 53, 9.) It is that in which being and non-being are neutralized by each other into a balanced state. (VIa, 47, 32-33.) Being and non-being are relative conceptions. One implies the other. If It is not non-being, how can It be being? (III, 10, 14.) As all possible statues always exist potentially in a block of stone, so does this universe exist in the Absolute (at the time of Dissolution). So It is not non-being (*sūnya*). (III, 10, 7.) It is (at the same time) more *sūnya* than the ether (*Ākāśa*) (III, 10, 36)<sup>1</sup> and so may be called non-being (*sūnya*) in the sense of being very subtle. Kingsland similarly says: It is "No *thing*, but not nothing" (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 87) and "Nothing to the senses, yet All in reality." (*Ibid.*, p. 81.) Asva-ghoṣa similarly thinks of his Absolute which he calls the *Bhūta-tathatā*: "Thus we understand that Suchness (*Bhūta-tathatā*) is neither that which is existence, nor that which is non-existence, nor that which is at once existence and non-existence; that it is neither that which is unity, nor that which is plurality, nor that which is not at once unity or plurality." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 59.) Suzuki explains the idea of Asva-ghoṣa in a footnote in a manner which is exactly what

<sup>1</sup> न च नास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युज्यते चिद्वपुर्यदा ।  
 न चैवास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युक्तं शान्तमलं तदा ॥  
 यथा सदसतोः सत्ता समतायामवस्थितिः ॥  
 यतः सदसतो रूपं भावस्थं विद्धि तं परम् ॥  
 अशून्यापेक्षया शून्यशब्दार्थपरिकल्पना ।  
 अशून्यत्वात्संभवतः शून्यताशून्यते कुतः ॥  
 अनुत्कीर्णा यथा स्तम्भे संस्थिता शालमञ्जिका ।  
 तथा विश्वं स्थितं तत्र तेन शून्यं न तत्पदम् ॥  
 शून्यमाकाशतोऽधिकम् ॥

Vasiṣṭha holds: "It is *śūnya* (non-being) because it transcends all forms of separation and individuation; it is *aśūnya* because all possible things in the world emanate from it." (*Ibid.*, p. 58 note.) Compare also the *Bhagavad-gītā* which speaks of the Ultimate Reality as "The beginningless Absolute Brahman, which cannot be called being or non-being." (XIII, 13.)

The Absolute is neither *Vidyā* (that which exists—*vidyate*) nor *Avidyā* (that which does not exist). "It is that to which the concepts of *vidyā* or *avidyā* cannot be applicable, for both are relative conceptions opposed to each other and limiting each other. (VIa, 9, 18.) They are opposed to each other like light and darkness; and both conceptions vanish, when ignorance has vanished." (VIa, 9, 23.)<sup>1</sup>

The Absolute is beyond both *light and darkness*. "The Undecaying Reality is beyond light and darkness both. (III, 10, 18.) This light (our ordinary light) cannot be present in the Ultimate Reality (for all times), for it is produced from the elements (and therefore existing only as long as the elements are in manifestation). (III, 10, 15.) Darkness is the result of the non-manifestation of the gross elements, so it cannot exist in the Absolute (for It is the source of the gross elements). (III, 10, 16.) The Light of the Absolute is the Light of Its own Self-experience." (III, 10, 17.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> पयस्तरङ्गयोरैक्यं यथैव परमार्थतः ।

नाविद्यात्वं न विद्यात्वमिह किञ्चन विद्यते ॥

मिथः स्वान्ते तयोरन्तश्छायात्पनयोरिव ।

अविद्यायां विलीनायां क्षीणे द्वे एव कल्पने ॥

<sup>2</sup> मुक्तं तमःप्रकाशाभ्यामित्येतदजरं पदम् ॥

ब्रह्मण्ययं प्रकाशो हि न संभवति भूतजः ॥



Even the term Self is not quite appropriate to the Absolute which is equally the *Self and the Not-self*, or neither. "The terms (*saṃjñā*) Self, etc., are not quite appropriate to the Absolute, but are only imagined. (III, 5, 5.) The Self and the Not-self are imagined by the Brahman within Itself by Its own power." (V, 73, 19.)<sup>1</sup> And therefore cannot be applicable to the Absolute as such. Compare Bradley who says: "The Self is no doubt the highest form of experience which we have, but for all that, is not a true form. It does not give us the facts as they are in reality." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 119.)

It cannot also be called *spirit or matter* (*celanā*, or *jada*), for both are differentiations within Itself. "To the inexpressible Absolute the terms and conceptions of spirit or matter, etc., have no meaning. They are as much absent therein as creepers and leaves, etc., are in a desert." (III, 91, 36.)<sup>2</sup> Compare what Wildon Carr says: "Life and matter are not two realities, but two directions in an original movement. The one is the inverse of the other, and the ultimate reality holds both within itself." (Carr: *The Philosophy of Change*, pp. 171-172.) Similarly Hoffding also thinks: "There

महाभूतप्रकाशानामभावस्तम उच्यते ।

महाभूताभावजं तु तेनात्र न तमः कश्चित् ॥

स्वानुभूतिः प्रकाशोऽस्य केवलं व्योमरूपिणः ।

योऽन्तर्हस्ति स तेनैव न त्वन्येनानुभूयते ॥

<sup>1</sup> तस्य चात्मादिकाः संज्ञाः कल्पिता न स्वभावज्ञाः ॥

नात्माऽयमयमय्यात्मा संज्ञाभेद इति स्वयम् ।

तेनैव सर्वगतया शक्त्या स्वात्मनि कल्पितः ॥

<sup>2</sup> जडचेतनभावादिशब्दार्थश्रीर्न विद्यते ।

अनिर्देक्ष्यपदे पत्रलतादीव महामरौ ॥

might be for example a tap-root of Being from which both mind and matter sprang." (*Problems of Philosophy*, Chap. III.) This tap-root of Being is the Brahman of Vasiṣṭha, which therefore cannot be properly called either spirit or matter.

No predication (*idamtvā*) is therefore possible in the case of the Absolute which is everything. For, in the very moment when we say "It is this," It is also the other than this. "Because the Absolute is the one Self of, or identical with, all the ideas of all words and their meanings, it cannot be spoken of either as nothing or as this. (VIa, 47, 3.) All time, all space, and all movements being of It, how can anything be absolutely differentiated from another?" (VIa, 47, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

So, what the nature of the Absolute is is an absurd question, because no answer to it can be given. "What the *svabhāva* (peculiar characteristics) of the Brahman is cannot be described. For in the Infinite Absolute Reality there cannot be anything which is Its own (*sva*) and which is not Its own. (VIb, 10, 14.) *Abhāva* (absence) and *bhāva* (presence) being relative and mutually dependent ideas, the absurd concepts of *svabhāva* (peculiar qualities present in It), etc. cannot be spoken of the Brahman." (VIb, 10, 15.)<sup>2</sup> The idea seems to

<sup>1</sup> समस्तशब्दशब्दार्थवासनाकलनाविदः ।  
एकात्मत्वादसत्त्वेदमिति संकथ्यते कथम् ॥  
देशकालक्रियादीनामपि तन्मयरूपतः ।  
इदमन्यदिदं चान्यदिति नात्रोपपद्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> ब्रह्मणः कः स्वभावोऽसाविति वक्तुं न युज्यते ।  
अनन्ते परमे तत्त्वे स्वत्वास्वत्वासंभवात् ॥  
अभावसव्यपेक्षस्य भावस्यासंभवादपि ।  
पदं वदन्ति नानन्ते स्वभावाद्या दुर्लभतः ॥

be that the Absolute cannot be said to have any particular and definite nature of Its own, because no definite category is applicable to It. It is beyond all determinations, as all determinations are relative in their significance and are opposed to others. But the Brahman is the essence of all things.

This treatment of the Brahman, it may be noted here, is very much similar to the "*neti neti*" *vāda* of the *Upaniṣads* and to the Mādhyamic Philosophy of Nāgārjuna. We find in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, for example, "The absolute is neither inwardly cognizant, nor outwardly cognizant, nor on both sides together. It is neither a cognition-mass. It is neither knower nor not-knower. It is unseen, unpracticable, unthinkable, unpointable. It is the essence of the experience of self-identity; in it all this universe ceases." (*Māṇḍ. Up.*, VI, 7.) And in the *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: (II, 3, 6) "It is for this reason that they describe the Absolute as *Neti Neti* (not this, not this): there is nothing which exists outside It, the Brahman being all-inclusive." Nāgārjuna has also conceived the Tathāgata to be above the relative expressions. Thus we find in the *Mādhyamika Kārikās* (XXII, 11, 12): "It should not be said that Tathāgata is *śūnya* or *aśūnya*, or both or neither. The name given to Him is conventional. In the state of calmness (*Nirvāṇa*) the four kinds of ideas, permanent, impermanent, both or neither, cannot exist." Compare also how Bhartṛ-hari speaks of the Absolute in his *Vākya-paṭīya*: "Unity cannot exist without plurality, and *vice versa*. In the Absolute there is no distinction between the two. (III, 6, 26.) The conception of one will not stand, if many are not thought at the same time. So also the conception of many loses its meaning, when one is not thought of. (III, 6, 28.) In the Absolute



there is no admissibility of one or many, being or non-being. They belong only to the realm of creation." (III, 1, 12.)

Thus all our categories or concepts fail to describe the Absolute. All our terms for the Absolute are unsatisfactory. Yet we cannot but name the Absolute, for we have to talk of It, although really speaking we cannot talk of It. We have, therefore, to be satisfied with our names and descriptions of the Absolute, only if we do not forget that all our descriptions are only suggestive (*lakṣaṇika*) of the Absolute. So, for practical purposes, and from various points of view, various names have been given to the Ultimate Reality by various schools of thought, some of which Vasiṣṭha with much liberality of mind, although not quite precisely, mentions in the following passages: "Many names have been coined for the Absolute by the learned for practical purposes (*vyavahārārtham*), such as *Rtam* (Law or Truth), Self, *Param Brahma*, *Satyam* (Truth), etc. (III, 1, 12.) It is called *Puruṣa* by the Sāṃkhya Philosophers, Brahman by the *Vedānta-vādins* (followers of the *Upaniṣads*), pure and simple *Vijñāna-mātra* by the *Vijñāna-vādins*; *Sūnya* by the *Sūnya-vādins*; the *Illuminator* by the worshippers of the Sun; It is called the *Speaker*, the *Thinker*, the *Enjoyer* of actions and the *Doer* of them (the view of the Naiyāyikas probably); It is *Siva* for the worshippers of Siva; *Time* for those who believe in that alone (III, 5, 6-7; V, 87, 19); It is called the *Self of the Self* by those who know It thus; *Nairātmya* (Non-Self) by those who think thus; *Mādhya* by the Mādhyamikas; and the *All* by those who have a mind equally prone to all." (V, 87, 20.)<sup>1</sup> We

<sup>1</sup> ऋतमात्मा परं ब्रह्म सत्यमित्यादिका बुधैः ।

कल्पिता व्यवहारार्थं तस्य संज्ञा महात्मनः ॥

may add that It is the "Unconditioned" of Hamilton, "the Unscrutable Power" of Spencer, the "One" of Plotinus, the "Substance" of Spinoza, and the "Neutrum" of Schelling.

As various names have been given to the Absolute, so can It be described, for practical purposes and within limitations. In spite of language failing to convey an idea of the Absolute, it has to be described to make one have a self-intuition of It. We find quite a large number of verses in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in which the nature of the Absolute Reality is described. Here we translate a few of them :<sup>1</sup>

यः पुमान्सांख्यदृष्टीनां ब्रह्म वेदान्तवादिनाम् ।

विज्ञानमात्रं विज्ञानविदामेकान्तनिर्मलम् ॥

यः शून्यवादिनां शून्यो भासको योऽर्कतेजसाम् ।

वक्ता मन्ता ऋतं भोक्ता द्रष्टा कर्ता सदैव सः ॥

पुरुषः सांख्यदृष्टीनामीश्वरो योगवादिनाम् ।

शिवः शशिकलाङ्कनां कालः कालैकवादिनाम् ॥

आत्माऽऽत्मनस्तद्विदुषां नैरात्म्यं तादृशात्मनाम् ।

मध्यं माध्यमिकानां च सर्वं सुसमचेतसाम् ॥

<sup>1</sup> आकाशपरमाणुसहस्रांशमात्रेऽपि या शुद्धचिन्मात्रसत्ता विद्यते सा हि परमार्थसंयित् ॥

न दृश्यं नोपदेशार्हं नात्यासन्नं न दूरगम् ॥

केवलानुभवप्राप्यं चिद्रूपं शुद्धमात्मनः ॥

सर्वं सर्वात्मकं चैव सर्वार्थरहितं पदम् ॥

सर्वभूतात्मकं शून्यं सदसच्च परं पदम् ॥

तन्न वायुर्न चाकाशं न बुद्धवादि न शून्यकम् ।

न किञ्चिदपि सर्वात्म किमप्यन्यत्परं नभः ॥

न कालो न मनो नात्मा न सन्नासन्न देशदिक् ।

न मध्यमेतयोर्नान्तं न बोधो नाप्यबोधितम् ॥

यत्संवेद्यविनिर्मुक्तं संवेदनमनिर्मितम् ।

चेत्यमुक्तं चिदाभासं तद्विद्धि परमं पदम् ॥

"The Absolute Consciousness is the Reality which is immanent even in the thousandth part of an atom of ether (*akasha*) as pure Consciousness. (VIb, 61, 6.) It is the pure Consciousness behind the purified self,

सा परा परमा काश्चा सा दृशा दृगनुत्तमा ।  
 सा महिम्नां च महिमा गुरुणां स तथा गुरुः ॥  
 स तन्तुभूतमुक्तानां परिप्रोतहृदम्बरः ।  
 स भूतमरिचौघानां परमा तीक्ष्णता तथा ॥  
 स पदार्थे पदार्थत्वं स तत्त्वं यदनुत्तमम् ।  
 स सतो वस्तुनः सत्त्वमसत्त्वं वा सतः स्वतः ॥  
 सर्वतःपाणिपादान्तं सर्वतोक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।  
 सर्वतःश्रुतिमहोके सर्वमावृत्य संस्थितम् ॥  
 सर्वेन्द्रियगुणैर्मुक्तं सर्वेन्द्रियगुणान्वितम् ।  
 असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥  
 बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।  
 सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥  
 अणीयसामणीयांसं स्थविष्ठं च स्थवीयसाम् ।  
 गरीयसां गरिष्ठं च श्रेष्ठं च श्रेयसामपि ॥  
 ईदृशं तत्परं सूक्ष्मं यस्याग्रे यदिदं नभः ।  
 अणोः पार्श्वे महामेरुरिव स्थूलात्म लक्ष्यते ॥  
 ईदृशं तत्परं स्थूलं यस्याग्रे यदिदं जगत् ।  
 परमाणुवदाभाति कचिदेव न भाति च ॥  
 योऽयमन्तश्चिरेरात्मा सर्वानुभवरूपकः ॥  
 स जगत्तिलैलात्मा स जगद्गूहदीपकः ।  
 स जगत्पादपरसः स जगत्पशुपालकः ॥  
 सन्नप्यस्यो जगति यो देहस्थोऽपि दूरगः ।  
 चित्प्रकाशो ह्ययं यस्मादालोक इव भास्वतः ॥  
 यस्माद्विष्णवादयो देवाः सूर्यादिव मरीचयः ।  
 यस्माज्जगन्त्यनन्तानि बुद्बुदा जलधेरिव ॥  
 यं यान्ति दृश्यवृन्दानि पयांसीव महार्णवम् ॥



which is neither visible nor describable, neither far nor near, but realizable in experience alone, (VIa, 48, 10-11.) It is All, the Self of all, yet free from all objects. (VIb, 52, 36.) It is the Void which is both being and

य आकाशे शरीरे च दृषत्स्वप्नु लतासु च ।  
 पांसुष्वद्रिषु वातेषु पातालेषु च संस्थितः ॥  
 व्योम येन कृतं शून्यं शैला येन घनीकृताः ।  
 आपो द्रुताः कृता येन दीपो यस्य वशो रविः ॥  
 प्रसरन्ति यतश्चित्राः संसारासारवृष्टयः ।  
 अक्षयामृतसंपूर्णादम्भोदादिव वृष्टयः ॥  
 आविर्भावतिरोभावमयास्त्रिभुवनोर्मयः ।  
 स्फुरन्त्यतितते यस्मिन्मराविव मरीचयः ॥  
 नाशरूपो विनाशात्मा योऽन्तःस्थः सर्वजन्तुषु ।  
 गुप्तो योऽप्यतिरिक्तोऽपि सर्वभावेषु संस्थितः ॥  
 निवर्तिर्देशकालौ च चलनं स्पन्दनं क्रिया ।  
 इति येन गताः सत्तां सर्वसत्तातिगामिना ॥  
 अत्यन्ताभाव एवास्ति संसारस्य यथास्थितेः ।  
 यस्मिन्बोधमहाम्भोधौ तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
 द्रष्टृदृश्यक्रमो यत्र स्थितोऽप्यस्तमयं गतः ।  
 यदनाकाशमाकाशं तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
 अशून्यमिव यच्छून्यं यस्मिञ्छून्यं जगत्स्थितम् ।  
 सर्गौघे सति यच्छून्यं तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
 यन्महाचिन्मयमपि बृहत्पाषाणवत्स्थितम् ।  
 जडं वाऽजडमेवान्तस्तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
 चिन्मात्रं चेत्यरहितमनन्तमजरं शिवम् ।  
 अनादिमध्यपर्यन्तं यदनादि निरामयम् ॥  
 यस्यान्यदस्ति न विभोः कारणं शशशृङ्गवत् ।  
 यस्येदं च जगत्कार्यं तरङ्गौघ इवाम्भसः ॥  
 सस्पन्दे समुदेतीव निःस्पन्देऽन्तर्गते न च ।  
 इयं यस्मिञ्जगत्क्षमीरलात इव चक्रता ॥

non-being, and yet has all creatures within Itself. (VIb, 52, 27.) It is something very subtle, which is all and yet nothing particular, which is neither air, nor ether, nor intellect, etc., nor void (*sūnya*), but beyond them

जगन्निर्माणविलयविलासो व्यापको महान् ।  
स्पन्दस्पर्शस्पर्शात्मको यस्य स्वभावो निर्मलोऽक्षयः ॥  
नाशयित्वा स्वमात्मानं मनसो वृत्तिसंक्षये ।  
सद्रूपं यदनाख्येयं तद्रूपं तस्य वस्तुनः ॥  
नास्ति दृश्यं जगद् द्रष्टा दृश्याभावाद्विलीनवत् ।  
भातीति भासनं यस्यास्तद्रूपं तस्य वस्तुनः ॥  
चित्तेर्जीवस्वभावाया यदचेत्योन्मुखं वपुः ।  
चिन्मात्रं विमलं शान्तं तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
वेदनस्य प्रकाशस्य दृश्यस्य तमस्तथा ।  
वेदनं यदनाद्यन्तं तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥  
मनः स्वप्नेन्द्रियैर्मुक्तं यद्रूपं स्यान्महाचितेः ।  
जडमे स्यादे वाऽपि तत्सर्वान्तेऽवशिष्यते ॥  
देशादेशान्तरं दूरं प्राप्तायाः संविदो वपुः ।  
निमेषेणैव तन्मध्ये चिदाकाशं तदुच्यते ॥  
अनागतायां निद्रायां मनोविषयसंक्षये ।  
पुंसः स्वस्थस्य यो भावः स चिदाकाश उच्यते ॥  
द्रष्टृदर्शनदृश्यानां त्रयाणामुदयो यतः ।  
यत्र वाऽस्तमयश्चित्त्वं तद्विद्धि विगतामयम् ॥  
दिक्कालाद्यनविच्छन्नरूपत्वादतिविस्तृतम् ।  
तदनाद्यन्तमाभासं भासनीयविवर्जितम् ॥  
चित्प्रकाशस्य यन्मध्यं प्रकाशस्यापि स्वस्य वा ।  
दर्शनस्य च यन्मध्यं तद्रूपं ब्रह्मणो विदुः ॥  
जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तेषु तुयांतुर्यातिगे पदे ।  
समं सदैव सर्वत्र चिदात्मानमुपास्महे ॥  
परमाकाशनगरनाथमण्डपभूमिषु ।  
स्वशक्तिवृत्तं संसारं पश्यन्ती साक्षिवस्थिता ॥

(VIb, 52, 28.) It is neither time, nor mind, nor self, nor being, nor non-being, nor space, nor direction, nor their middle, nor their end, nor unenlightened knowledge. (VIb, 52, 30.) It is Consciousness without thought, Illumination without any object opposed to it. (VIa, 59, 4.) It is the Ultimate support, the knowledge of all particular knowledges, the greatness of the great, and the heaviest of the heavy. (VIa, 59, 5.) It is the thread running through the hearts of all creatures. It is the pungency of all the chillies of beings. (VIa, 59, 9.) It is the thingness of things, existence of the existent, and non-existence of the non-existent. (VIa, 59, 10.) It has its feet, hands, eyes, heads, mouths and ears everywhere, and embraces all objects within itself. (VIb, 14, 9.) It is associated with all sense-qualities, yet is free from all of them. It supports all, yet is not attached to any form. It enjoys all qualities, yet is free from all. (VIb, 14, 10.) It is within and without all beings. It is both spirit and matter. It is the nearest, yet being very subtle, It is unknown and far. (VIb, 14, 11.) It is the heaviest of the heavy; subtlest of the subtle; greatest of the great; and the best of all the good things. (VIb, 35, 16.) It is so subtle that in comparison to it the *ākāśa* (ether) looks as gross as the Meru mountain in comparison to an atom. (VIa, 96, 16.) It is so extensive that in comparison to it the whole universe is like a minute invisible atom. (VIb, 96, 17.) It is the Experience of all and the Self of Consciousness. (VIa, 59, 7.) It is the oil of the world-sesamum; it is the lamp of the world-room; it is the sap of the world-tree; it is the cow-herd of the world-cow. (VIa, 59, 8.) It is that from which, as rays from the sun, originate gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, etc., and innumerable worlds like bubbles from the sea. (III, 5, 8-9.) It is that towards



which move all objects as well as the Self. (III, 5, 10.) It pervades all being—bodies, stones, creepers, sand-particles, mountains, winds and the nether worlds. (III, 5, 11.) It is that by which the sky is made empty, the mountains are made hard, waters are made to move quickly; under the control of which the sun keeps shining like a lamp (III, 5, 13); that from which, like torrents of rain from the ocean, proceed the multifarious worlds. (III, 5, 14.) It is that ocean from which the waves of manifestation and withdrawal of worlds originate. (III, 5, 15.) It is that which resides in all creatures as the undecaying, yet appearing as decaying, principle. (III, 5, 16.) It is that reality beyond all existence which brings into existence time, space, regularity, movements and actions. (III, 5, 22.) It is that ocean of Consciousness in which there is absolute negation of the world as it exists for us (III, 7, 20); in which the distinction of subject and object, in spite of its existence for us, is totally non-existent (III, 7, 21); that which though not really void is a void to us (Cf. "Nothing to the senses, yet All in reality"—Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 81); that which is void in spite of the existence of the multitudes of worlds existing within itself. (III, 7, 22.) It is that which, although great Consciousness, is found to be unconscious like a rock; and, although appearing inert, is conscious within. (III, 7, 23.) It is *Cin-mātram* (mere Consciousness) without any object opposed to it, without change, beginning, middle or end. (III, 9, 50.) It is that which has no other cause of itself, but which is the cause of the world, as water of its waves. (III, 9, 55.) It is that from which, when it is in motion, the vision of the world proceeds and, when at rest, merges in it, like the appearance of a circle in a fire-brand (III, 9, 58); whose eternal nature

is to evolve from and to involve in itself the world through its own movement and rest. (III, 9, 59.) The nature of this reality is experienced when all thoughts of the mind have vanished, and the ego is lost (III, 10, 39); when the feeling of being a knower is totally absent on account of the total negation of objectivity, and consequently, pure enlightenment shines in itself (III, 10, 40); when Consciousness divested of all objectivity experiences its own being. (III, 10, 41.) It is that beginningless and endless Consciousness which reveals knowledge as well as ignorance, subject and object. (III, 10, 47.) It is that Pure Consciousness which exists beyond the senses and the mind in all living and non-living beings. (III, 10, 52.) It is that experience which is realized to endure between the subsiding of one thought (idea) and the rise of another. (VIb, 106, 4.) The Ether of Consciousness (*Cid-ākāśa*) is experienced when one rests within, after having banished all thoughts and objects from his mind, without, of course, getting sleep. (VIb, 106, 7.) It is that in which originate the subject and knowledge. (VIb, 106, 11.) It is the beginningless and endless Consciousness which is not limited in time, space, etc., and which is not opposed to any object by its side. (III, 10, 33.) It is that which is uniformly and equally present in the subject, the object and knowledge. (III, 10, 46.) It is that experience which is uniformly present throughout the states of waking, dream, sleep, the fourth (*Turiya*) and also beyond the fourth. (VIa, 11, 98.) It is the spectator of the drama of the world enacted by its own Power on the stage of the city of the Great Void." (VIa, 37, 12.) etc., etc., etc.

This description of the Brahman is in many places similar to what we find in the *Upaniṣads*. Compare, for example, the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, Second *Muṇḍaka*;



the *Kena Upaniṣad*, I, 2-8; the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 5, 55; III, 7, 2-23; III, 8, 8-12; the *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, II, 17; III, 7; IV, 14; etc. Compare also Aśva-ghoṣa's conception of *Bhūta-tathata* (Suchness): "The quintessence of the Mahā-yāna as such-ness exists in all things, remains unchanged in the pure as well as in the defiled, is always one and the same (*samata*), neither increases nor decreases, and is void of distinction." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 53-54.) "It was not created in the past, nor is it to be annihilated in the future, it is eternal, permanent, absolute; and from all eternity it sufficiently embraces in its essence all possible merits (*puṇya*)." (*Ibid.*, p. 95.) Vasiṣṭha's conception of the Brahman may also be very well compared with that of the "Primordial Substance" of Kingsland, which is as follows: "From IT all things proceed, and in IT all things exist; yet these may disappear while IT eternally remains. And just as we see that the physical world—differentiated out of the Ether—occupies an infinitesimally small portion of space; that is to say; that it is only a comparatively negligible portion of the Ether which becomes differentiated into physical matter, so also we must conceive that even the Ether does not differentiate the whole of Primordial Substance, but that behind or beyond every plane or grade of differentiation—physical, etheric, mental or spiritual, whatever may be the classification we adopt—there lies the infinite ocean of the One Root-Substance-Principle, itself, in its pure, eternal, incomprehensible GROUND or NOUMENON, the Source and Root, the Life, Energy, Motion, Consciousness of all that ever was, is, or will be." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 88.)



## CHAPTER XII

### THE MANIFESTATION OF THE ABSOLUTE

WE have already learnt that, according to Vasiṣṭha, the world is a manifestation of the mind; Mind is an expression of the Creative Power of the Absolute; and the Creative Power is only an aspect of the Absolute, with which it is ever one. From this it is evident that the world is a manifestation of the Absolute Reality which is Consciousness.

There being no other reality than the Absolute by Its side, and the Absolute being the omnipotent source of the world, we can say that the Absolute manifests into the world in Itself, and by Itself. This is what Vasiṣṭha thinks: "The world is the *br̥mhaṇam* (expansion) of the Brahman, and the *br̥mhaṇam* of the Brahman is the world. (VIa, 2, 51.) The Brahman, without beginning or end, overflows like an ocean. (VIa, 2, 27.) The Self Itself has arisen into the form of all objects, as an ocean into waves, ripples and sprays. (V, 72, 23.) What appears as the spread out network of the worlds is all Brahman existing in Itself. (VIa, 11, 16.) It is, (as it were), the *kacakacanam* (dazzling) of Consciousness (VIb, 213, 18.) Whatever is seen here is all existing in the Absolute Self. It is the Infinite and the Full opening Itself out in Itself. (VIa, 99, 18.) Whatever is produced here, exists here and is destroyed here, is the

Brahman changing Itself in the Brahman by the powers of the Brahman. (III, 100, 28.) As a world of dream is only the manifestation of the consciousness of the dreamer, so is this world a manifestation of the Self within the Self. (III, 11, 20.) As in dream as well as in deep sleep, so also in the creation-state as well as in dissolution, there is nothing else in the world but the Undecaying Brahman. (VIb, 213, 22.) As the waves, the billows, the ripples, the eddies, the bubbles, the sprays, etc., are water manifesting in water, so also the body, the creative force, the objective world, the growth and decay, the play of ideation in bringing things into existence, and the things of the world, are all Brahman manifesting in the Brahman. (VIa, 11, 40-41.) All that is seen in the nether worlds, on the earth, and in the heaven; all that exists in the hearts of creatures or within a straw, is the Brahman, is Consciousness. There is nothing else but That." (VIa, 2, 28.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what is held in the *Lankavatara-sūtra* about the *Ālaya-vijñāna*:

"Even so in the *Ālaya*-sea  
 Stirred by the Objectivity-wind  
 All kinds of mentation waves  
 Arise a-dancing, a-rolling."

(Suzuki: *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 130.)

<sup>1</sup> ब्रह्मकुंहेव हि जगज्जगच्च ब्रह्मकुंहुणम् ॥  
 ब्रह्मैव तदनाद्यन्तमव्ययत्प्रविजृम्भते ॥  
 आत्मैव स्पन्दते विश्वं वस्तुजातैरिवोदितम् ।  
 तरङ्गकणकल्लोलैरजन्ताम्ब्वम्बुधाविव ॥  
 यदिदं किञ्चिदाभोगि जगज्जालं प्रदृश्यते ।  
 तत्सर्वममलं ब्रह्म भवत्येतद् व्यवस्थितम् ॥  
 चिदाकाशमिदं पुत्र स्वच्छं कचकचायते ।  
 यन्नाम तज्जगद्भाति जगदन्यन्न विद्यते ॥

It has been remarked by Joad that "Diversity and plurality can develop out of unity in virtue of some initial potency for diversity and plurality latent in the Unity." (Joad: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, p. 65.) Vasiṣṭha seems to be conscious of this fact, and so holds that the world is ever potentially existent in the Unity of the Brahman. "As in a seed the tree exists (potentially) with all its leaves, flowers, branches, fruits, trunk and root, so does this world exist in the Brahman. (III, 100, 11.) It exists in the Brahman as fire in a sun-glass, and butter in milk. (VIa, 9, 27.) All the three worlds exist in Consciousness as pungency in a chilly. (VIa, 2, 52.) As all toys that can be made of clay are ever (potentially) present in clay; as all dolls that can be made of a block of wood are ever present in it; as all the shades of a picture are present in the paint with which they are to be painted, so all

यदिदं भासते तत्सत्परमेवात्मनि स्थितम् ।

परं परे परापूर्णे सममेव विजृम्भते ॥

जायते नश्यति तथा यदिदं याति तिष्ठति ।

तदिदं ब्रह्मणि ब्रह्म ब्रह्मणा च विवर्तते ॥

यथा पुरमिवास्तेऽन्तर्विदेव स्वप्नसंविदः ।

तथा जगदिवाभाति स्वात्मैव परमात्मनि ॥

यथा स्वप्ने सुषुप्ते च निद्रैकेनाक्षयाऽनिशम् ।

सर्गेऽस्मिन्प्रलये चैव ब्रह्मैकं चित्तिरव्ययम् ॥

यः कणो या च कणिका या वीचिर्यस्तरङ्गकः ।

यः फेनो या च लहरी तथ्या वारि वारिणि ॥

यो देहो या च कलना यद् दृश्यं यौ क्षयाक्षयौ ।

या भावरचना योऽर्थस्तथा तद् ब्रह्म ब्रह्मणि ॥

पाताले भूतले स्वर्गे तृणे प्राण्यम्बरेऽपि च ।

दृश्यते तत्परं ब्रह्म चिद्रूपं नान्यदस्ति हि ॥



the worlds are ever present in the Absolute." (III, 61, 24.)<sup>1</sup> It seems that the plurality and multiplicity of the world, which can never be evolved from an abstract and simple Unity, is conceived by Vasiṣṭha to be ever present in the Absolute in a manner that the whole as such is a homogeneous Unity with all differentiations and distinctions so balanced against one another that they blend into a Unity in the Vision of the Whole, probably in the same way as the seven colours of the rays of the sun, in spite of their ever remaining ever different colours, are together perceived as pure and simple whiteness by us; or as hydrogen and oxygen mixed in certain proportions appear as pure and simple water to us. This conception of the Absolute is very much similar to that of Bradley presented in his famous work *Appearance and Reality*. According to Bradley: "The Absolute stands above and not below, its internal distinctions. It does not eject them, but it includes them as elements in its fullness. It is not the difference but the concrete identity of all extremes." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 533.)

We see plurality, change and imperfections in the world, because our vision of the Reality is relative and limited. In the Absolute all appearances are so reconciled that It is the Unified Whole, the Immutable and ever Perfect Reality. This Immutable and ever Perfect whole appears in the world to be the ever

<sup>1</sup> फलपुष्पलतापत्रशाखाविटपमूलवान् ।

वृक्षबीजे यथा वृक्षस्तथेदं ब्रह्मणि स्थितम् ॥

सूर्यकान्ते यथा वह्निर्यथा क्षरि घृतं तथा ॥

चिदन्तरस्ति त्रिजगन्मरिचे तीक्ष्णता यथा ॥

अनुत्कीर्णा यथा पङ्के पुत्रिका चाथ दासणि ।

यथा वर्णा मयीकल्के तथा सर्गाः स्थिताः परे ॥

changing and imperfect many, only when they are taken in isolation from others. This is what constitutes the world. The appearance of the Reality is very nicely pointed out by Vasiṣṭha in the following words: "In reality the Absolute and the world are the same, yet in the world It appears different from what It in Itself is. It is one, yet it appears as many; It is the Whole, yet it appears not to be so; though not empty, yet It appears to be so; though very subtle, yet appears to be concrete or gross; ever shining, yet It appears to be concealed; changeless, yet appears changing; ever calm, yet appears to be agitated; ever existent, yet appears to be non-existing; undivided whole, yet appears to be divided; Conscious, yet appears as unconscious; never an object, yet appears as objects; partless, yet appears in parts; ego-less, yet appears as an ego; imperishable, yet appears perishable; free from evil, yet appears to be with evil; objectless, yet appears to be with an object; bright, yet appears as dark; very ancient, yet appears new; subtler than even an atom, yet appears to have worlds within; the Self of all, yet appears to be forgotten and attainable with effort; though in Itself not a network of multiplicity, yet appears to be so; without any *māya* (deception), yet appears to be giving rise to it like the sun to its rays." (VIb, 35, 6-13.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सत्यं ब्रह्म जगच्चैकं स्थितमेकमनेकवत् ।

सर्वं वा सर्ववद्भाति शुद्धं चाशुद्धवत्ततम् ॥

अशून्यं शून्यमिव च शून्यं वाऽशून्यवत्स्फुटम् ।

स्फारमस्फारमिव तदस्फारं स्फारसंनिभम् ॥

अविकारं विकारीव समं शान्तमशान्तवत् ।

सदेवासदिवादृश्यं तदेवातदिवोदितम् ॥

The Absolute of Vasiṣṭha is thus not the abstract and simple Unity of some thinkers, against which much has been said in the history of philosophy. It is not a notion arrived at by stripping off the world from It. For Vasiṣṭha, the world is within the Absolute, and to manifest as the world is the very nature (*svabhāva*) of the Absolute, as we have already noticed. "It is the very nature of Consciousness to manifest Itself in the form of world-objects, and this nature can be seen at work in dreams and the world of fancy." (VIb, 191, 10-11.)<sup>1</sup> He goes even so far as to say: "As gold does not exist without some shape or form, so God does not exist without the ego and the world in Him. (VIa, 96, 43-44.) The being of Consciousness is that of the world, and the being of the world is that of Consciousness." (III, 14, 75.)<sup>2</sup> Similarly says

अविभागं विभागीव निर्जाड्यं जडवद्गतम् ।  
 अचेत्यं चेत्यभावीव निरंशं सांशशोभनम् ॥  
 अनहं सोऽहमिव तदनाशमिव नाशवत् ।  
 अकलङ्कं कलङ्कीव निर्वेशं वेशवाहिवत् ।  
 आलोकि ध्वान्तवनवन्नववच्च पुरातनम् ।  
 परमाणोरपि तनु गभीकृतजगद्रणम् ॥  
 सर्वात्मकमपि त्यक्तं दृष्टे कष्टेन भूयसा ।  
 अजालमपि जालाद्वयं चाशेषवदनेकधा ॥  
 निर्मायमपि मायांशुमण्डलामलमास्कारम् ।  
 ब्रह्म विद्धि विदं नाथमपामिव महोदधिम् ॥

<sup>1</sup> एष एव स्वभावोऽस्या यदेवं भाति मामुरा ॥

एतत्तु स्वप्नसंकल्पनगरेष्वनुभूयते ॥

<sup>2</sup> संनिवेशं विना सत्ता यथा हेम्नो न विद्यते ।

तथा जगदहंभावं विना नेशस्य संस्थितिः ॥

चित्सत्तैव जगत्सत्ता जगत्सत्तैव चिद्वपुः ॥



Bradley: "The Absolute is Its appearances, It really is all and every one of them." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 486.)

It may also be pointed out here that the world-process which for us extends to ages is, according to Vasiṣṭha, only a moment's work in the Absolute. For, as has already been observed, time is relative to the mind, "The rise and fall of the multitudes of worlds in ages is an experience of *kalpas* (ages) for some, and of moments for another. (III, 40, 30.) The activity of a millionth part of (our) moment in the Absolute Consciousness is the world-process extending to ages." (III, 61, 17.)<sup>1</sup>

The plurality and multiplicity of the world does in no way impair the Unity of the Absolute, for they are distinctions within the Absolute, which as such is a Homogeneous and Undifferentiated Mass of Consciousness. "The multiplicity of the world (*nānāta*) is within the undifferentiated Consciousness mass (*piṇḍam ekam akhaṇḍitam*) in the same way as the variety of the hues of a peacock-tail is present in the homogeneous liquid of the egg (out of which it comes out). (VIa, 47, 29.) All the things of the world taken as an undifferentiated mass (*piṇḍam ekam akhaṇḍitam*) are the Brahman, as all leaves, fruits, branches and trunk of a tree exist in a seed-form. (III, 67, 36.) Just as the unity of the sleep-consciousness is preserved intact in spite of its manifestation into the plurality of

<sup>1</sup> क्षणकल्पजगत्संघाः समुद्यन्ति गलन्ति च ।

निमेधात्कस्यचित्कल्पात्कस्यचिच्च क्रमं शृणु ॥

तुल्यकालनिमेधांशलक्षभागप्रतीतिर्यत् ।

निजं विदः प्रकचनं तत्सर्गौघपरम्परा ॥

dream-objects, so also the one Ether of Consciousness (*Cid-akasa*) is manifesting Itself as many without losing Its Unity. (VIb, 144, 23.) As multiplicity of waves exists within the unity of an ocean; as dolls in a block of wood; as pots in a lump of clay; so does the plurality exist in the Unity of the Brahman. (VIb, 34, 25.) As the homogeneous mass of light has within it the multiplicity of rays; as the homogeneous mass of water has within it the multiplicity of drops; so the Absolute Consciousness has within It the multiplicity of vibrations of the world-appearances." (IV, 36, 16.)<sup>1</sup> Bradley also accepts this as a fact, but finds it difficult to account for it, as appears from: "We do not know why and how the Absolute divides itself into centres or the way in which so divided it still remains one." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 527.) Kingsland also holds a view similar to that of Vasiṣṭha: "In each and every case where we say, in the conventional language of the formal mind, that the Unity *becomes* a multiplicity, or *appears* in separation or opposition; the fundamental unity is in

<sup>1</sup> चित्ति तत्त्वेऽस्ति नानाता तदभिव्यञ्जनात्मानं ।

विचित्रपिच्छिकापुञ्जो मयूराण्डरसे यथा ॥

ब्रह्म सर्वं जगद्वस्तु पिण्डमेकमखण्डितम् ।

फलपत्रलतागुल्मपीठबीजमिव स्थितम् ॥

एकमेव चिदाकाशं साकारत्वमनेककम् ।

स्वरूपमजहदत्ते यत्स्वप्न इव तज्जगत् ॥

यथोम्पादि जले वृक्षे यथा वा शालमञ्जिकाः ।

यथा घटादयो भूमौ तथा ब्रह्मणि सर्गता ॥

तेजःपुञ्जैर्यथा तेजः पयःपूरैर्यथा पयः ।

परिस्फुरति संस्पन्दैस्तथा चित्सर्गविभ्रमैः ॥

no wise thereby in any case divided, it still *remains* in all its absoluteness. The Ether does not cease to be Ether, *qua* Ether, when it differentiates into physical matter; . . . The Cosmic Mind does not cease to be Cosmic Mind, as such, when a portion of it differentiates into individual minds." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 223.)

The Absolute is not affected even in the least by the world-process that is going on within It. The world does not add anything to Its ever present Perfection, nor does it take anything away from It. "As the sky is not made wet by the showers from the clouds existing within it, so also the multiplicity of the world-processes existing within and on the basis of the Absolute Consciousness does not at all affect in any way the Absolute. (IV, 36, 5.) The Absolute continues unchanged and unaffected in spite of the series of the world-dreams appearing one after another within It. (VIb, 72, 3.) As water does not change into something else by the constant rise and fall of waves on its surface, so also the Absolute does not become anything else by evolution and involution of worlds within It." (VIb, 195, 27.)<sup>1</sup> Bādarāyaṇa, the author of the *Brahma-sūtras*, also thinks similarly: "The Brahman manifests itself into the world without undergoing the least change" (I, 4, 26), and "without ceasing to be what it was." (II, 1, 27.) Śaṅkara

<sup>1</sup> स्वाधारैरम्बुदैः खस्थैर्न स्पृष्टं गगनं यथा ।

चित्स्थैः सर्गैश्चिदाधारैर्न स्पृष्टा चित्परा तथा ॥

जगदाख्ये महाख्ये स्वप्नात्स्वप्नान्तरं व्रजत् ।

रूपं त्यजति नो शान्तं ब्रह्म शान्तत्ववृंहणम् ॥

यथा पयसि वीचीनामुन्मज्जननिमज्जनैः ।

न जलान्पत्वमेवं हि भावाभावैः परैः पदे ॥



agrees on this point and holds: "As the magician is not affected by the illusion (*māyā*) which he himself has created, because it is without reality (*avastu*), so also *Param Brahma* is not affected by the illusion of *samsāra*" (Deussen: - *The System of Vedānta*, p. 275); and "As the dreamer creates many forms, and yet remains one and undivided, as gods and magicians, without changing their nature, make horses, elephants, etc., appear, so the manifold creation arises in the uniform Brahman, without the Brahman thereby undergoing the least change of nature." (*Ibid.*, p. 278—*The Commentary* of Śaṅkara on the *Sūtra*, II, 1, 28 of the *Brahma-sūtras*.)

If that is so, how can the Absolute be said to be the cause of the world-process? It cannot be said to be the Creative Cause of the world in the ordinary sense of the term, replies Vasiṣṭha. It is the agent (*kartā*), cause or creator of the world in a peculiar sense. Its mere existence in its own calmness causes the world-evolution or involution. It is, as Aristotle held in Greece, unmoving cause of the movements of the world-process. Mere *saṁnidhi* (presence by the side nearby) of the Absolute is a sufficient motive force of the world. "The Self, in spite of Its ever remaining calm, without doing anything, is the doer of everything, like the indifferently shining lamp as the cause of our perceptions. (IV, 56, 17.) It does not do anything in spite of doing everything like the sun with regard to the activities of the day. (IV, 56, 18.) The regular course of the world is going on by the mere presence (*saṁnidhi-mātreṇa*) of the Ultimate Consciousness, as light proceeds from the mere presence of the lamp without any desire on its part (IV, 56, 27); as by the mere presence of clouds the *kuṭāja* flowers bloom.

(IV, 56, 28.) It is the cause of the world-process, without any desire on its part, by its mere existence, as a piece of magnet is the cause of the movements of iron. (IV, 56, 31 ; VIa, 9, 32.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सर्वकर्ताऽप्यकर्तेव करोयात्मा न किंचन ।  
 तिष्ठत्येवमुदासीन आलोकं प्रति दीपवत् ॥  
 कुर्वन्न किंचित्कुरुते दिवाकार्यमिवांशुमान् ।  
 गच्छन्न गच्छति स्वस्थः स्वास्पदस्थो रविर्यथा ॥  
 इयं संनिधिमात्रेण नियतिः परिजृम्भते ।  
 दीपसंनिधिमात्रेण निरिच्छैव प्रकाशते ॥  
 अभ्रसंनिधिमात्रेण कुटुजानि यथा स्वयम् ।  
 आत्मसंनिधिमात्रेण त्रिजगन्ति तथा स्वयम् ॥  
 अतः स्वात्मनि कर्तृत्वमकर्तृत्वं च संस्थितम् ।  
 निरिच्छत्वादकर्ताऽसौ कर्ता संनिधिमात्रतः ॥  
 अकर्तुरेव हि तथा कर्तृता तस्य कथ्यते ।  
 मणिसंनिधिमात्रेण यथाऽयः स्पन्दते जडम् ॥

## CHAPTER XIII

### IDENTITY OF EVERYTHING WITH THE ABSOLUTE

IN the last chapter we have seen that, according to Vasiṣṭha the Absolute manifests Itself into the world which ever exists in a potential form within It. In this chapter we shall try to understand how he conceives the relation of the world and things within it to the Absolute.

As the Brahman is the Ultimate and Absolute Reality from which everything in the world originates, in which everything exists, and into which everything merges, there cannot be anything in the world which is essentially different from the Brahman. When everything lives, moves and has its being in the Absolute, how can it be separate from Brahman? Everything must in that case be essentially identical with it. It cannot be other than the Brahman, just as no ornament of gold can be anything other than gold; as no form of water can be anything other than water; as no thought can be other in essence than the mind in which it occurs. This relation is termed by Vasiṣṭha as identity (*tadātmatā*), non-difference (*abhinnatā*), non-otherness (*ananyatva*), etc. This is very similar to what we find expressed in the *Upaniṣads* in such expressions as "Thou art That" (Vide, *The Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VI) with regard to the relation of individual to the Absolute.



According to the Sāṃkhya philosophers *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* are two realities essentially different in nature from each other, but, as we have already seen, *Prakṛti*, according to Vasiṣṭha, is only a creative Power of the Absolute assuming a form to manifest the world. It evolves out of the Absolute and returns back to It. It is not, therefore, anything different from the Absolute, which is often called the Self by him. "As a jar is nothing different from clay, so the *Prakṛti* is not essentially different from the Self. It is only the Self existing in this form. (VIa, 49, 29.) As a circular motion of water is called an eddy, so also an agitation in the Self is called by the name of *Prakṛti*, and as an eddy is water, so the *Prakṛti* is the Self. (VIa, 49, 30.) As wind and air differ only in name and not in reality, so also the *Prakṛti* and the Self are different only in name and not in reality. (VIa, 49, 31.) The difference between the two is due to our ignorance; it will cease to be believed in the enlightened state," (VIa, 49, 32.)<sup>1</sup>

In the same way the mind is not different from the Absolute, but identical with It in essence. "The limited, relative forms called minds originate from the Absolute, so know them to be the Absolute. (III, 100, 23.)

- <sup>1</sup> नात्मनः प्रकृतिभिन्ना घटान्मृन्मयता यथा ।  
 सन्मृन्मात्रं यथा चान्तरात्मैवं प्रकृतिः स्थिता ॥  
 आवर्तः सलिलस्येव यः स्पन्दस्त्वयमात्मनः ।  
 प्रोक्तः प्रकृतिशब्देन तेनैवेह स एव हि ॥  
 यथैकः स्पन्दपवनौ नाम्ना भिन्नौ न सत्तया ।  
 तथैकमात्मप्रकृती नाम्ना भिन्ने न सत्तया ॥  
 अबोधोदेतयोर्भेदो बोधेनैव विलीयते ।  
 अबोधात्सन्मयो याति रज्ज्वां सर्पभ्रमो यथा ॥

The mind is the creative force of the Brahman, so it cannot be other than the Brahman. Know it to be identical with the Brahman." (III, 100, 17; VIb, 84, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

We have already seen that according to Vasiṣṭha every object of the world is an idea of some mind, and so nothing in essence is different from the mind in which it originates. The mind, we have seen, is a creative centre in the Absolute and as such identical in essence with the Absolute. The Mind being identical with the Absolute, it is not difficult to understand that everything is identical with the Absolute. Thus Vasiṣṭha says: "As gold and ornaments of gold are not two different things, so also the Brahman and the world are not. (III, 1, 17.) The world is not different from the Brahman as the waves are not different from water (III, 61, 4); as currents of air are not from air (III, 9, 33); as dream and the world of fancy are not from mind (VIb, 34, 24); as heat is not from fire, fragrance from a flower; blackness from ink; whiteness from snow; as sweetness from sugar (VIa, 3, 5); as pungency is not from chilly (V, 57, 1); saltiness from salt (V, 57, 2); as hardness from stone (V, 57, 4); inertness from a mountain (V, 57, 5); liquidity from water (V, 57, 6); branches from a tree (V, 57, 7); emptiness from the sky (V, 57, 8); impenetrability from a wall (V, 57, 10); existence from the Self (V, 57, 11); awareness from consciousness (V, 57, 12); pleasantness from milk (III, 61, 27); lustre from a gem (III, 61, 29); whiteness from a conchshell (III, 14, 72); oil

<sup>1</sup> प्रतियोगिव्यवच्छेदसंख्यारूपादयश्च ये ।

मनःशब्देः प्रकल्प्यन्ते ब्रह्मजान्ब्रह्म विद्धि तान् ॥

ब्राह्मी शक्तिरसौ तस्माद्ब्रह्मैव तदरिदम् ॥

अनन्यां तस्य तां विद्धि स्पन्दशक्ति मनोमयीम् ॥

from sesamum seeds." (III, 14, 74.) In fact "The being of the world is the being of Consciousness, and the being of Consciousness is the being of the world. (III, 14, 74.)"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यथा कटकशब्दार्थः पृथक्त्वाहो न काञ्चनात् ।  
 न हेम कटकात्तद्वज्जगच्छब्दार्थता परे ॥  
 कटकत्वं पृथग्घेनस्तद्वत्त्वं पृथग्जलात् ।  
 यथा न संभवत्येवं न जगत्पृथगीश्वरात् ॥  
 स्पन्दत्वं पवनान्दन्यन्न कदाचन कुत्रचित् ।  
 स्पन्द एव सदा वायुर्जगत्तस्मान्न भिद्यते ॥  
 काकतालीयवच्चित्वाजगतो भाति ब्रह्म खम् ।  
 स्वप्नसंकल्पपुरवत्तत्तस्माद्विशते कथम् ॥  
 यथा न भिन्नमनलादौष्ण्यं सौगन्ध्यमम्बुजात् ।  
 कार्ण्यं कज्जलतः शौक्ल्यं हिमान्माधुर्यमिक्षुतः ॥  
 यदात्ममरिचस्यान्तश्चित्वात्तीक्ष्णत्ववेदनम् ।  
 यदात्मलवणस्यान्तश्चित्वाल्हृद्वणवेदनम् ॥  
 स्वतो यदात्मदृषद्विश्वत्वात्काठिन्यवेदनम् ॥  
 स्वतो यदात्मशैलस्य इतया जाड्यवेदनम् ।  
 स्वतो यदात्मतोयस्य चिद्द्रवत्वादिवर्तनम् ॥  
 यदात्मगगनस्यान्तश्चित्वाच्छून्यत्ववेदनम् ।  
 स्वतो यदात्मवृक्षस्य शाखादिस्तस्य वेदनम् ॥  
 स्वतो यदात्मकुड्यस्य नैरन्तर्यं निरन्तरम् ।  
 स्वतो यदात्मसत्तायाश्चित्वात्सत्त्वैकवेदनम् ॥  
 अन्तरात्मप्रकाशस्य स्वतो यदवभासनम् ।  
 यथा क्षीरस्य माधुर्यं तीक्ष्णत्वं मरिचस्य च ।  
 द्रवत्वं पयसश्चैव स्पन्दनं पवनस्य च ॥  
 कचनं ब्रह्मरत्नस्य जगदित्येव यत्स्थितम् ।  
 तदकारणकं यस्मात्तेन न व्यतिरिच्यते ॥  
 चिदग्नौष्ण्यं जगत्प्रेषा जगच्चिच्छब्दशुक्ता ।  
 जगच्चिच्छब्दजठरं चिज्जलद्रवता जगत् ॥



Thus every thing, every state of existence, every activity, in short all that there is in the world is the Brahman. "Cause, action, actor, birth, death, and existence, everything is the Brahman, there is nothing else. (III, 100, 30.) The network of the worlds is the Brahman: the ten directions are the Brahman; time, space, things, activities, etc., all are the Brahman." (Vib, 60, 28.)<sup>1</sup> Thus not only is the individual identical with the Absolute, but everything is equally identical with It, as the *Chandogya Upaniṣad* also declared: "*Sarvaṁ khalv idam Brahma*," i.e., everything verily is here *Brahman*.

The Mahā-yāna Buddhists, it may be pointed out here, also spoke of things being identical with the mind or *Ālaya-vijñāna* in the same way as Vasiṣṭha did. But they kept in view at the same time the other fact of non-identity also. As'va-ghoṣa for example says: "Water can be said to be identical (in one sense) and not identical (in the other sense) with the waves." Similarly we find in the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*:

"The saline crystal and its red bluishness,  
The milky sap and its sweetness,  
The various flowers and their fruits,  
The sun and the moon and their luminosity:

जगच्चित्सर्वपद्मेहो वीचिच्चित्सरितो जगत् ।  
जगच्चिद्विमशीतत्वं चिज्ज्वालाज्वलनं जगत् ॥  
जगच्चित्पुष्पसौगन्ध्यं चिल्लुताप्रफलं जगत् ।  
चित्सत्तैव जगत्सत्ता जगत्सत्तैव चिद्वपुः ॥

<sup>1</sup> करणं कर्म कर्ता च जननं मरणं स्थितिः ।  
सर्वं ब्रह्मैव न ह्यस्ति तदिना कल्पनेतरा ॥  
ब्रह्मव्योम जगज्जालं ब्रह्मव्योम दिशो दश ।  
ब्रह्मव्योम कलाकालदेशद्रव्यक्रियादिकम् ॥

These are neither separable nor inseparable,  
As waves are stirred in the water,  
Even so the seven modes of mentation  
Are awakened in the mind and are united with it."  
(*Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* quoted by Suzuki in his *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, on page 131.)

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE REALM OF APPEARANCE

WE are now coming to a very delicate aspect of Vasiṣṭha's metaphysics, *viz.*, that the world-experience is not real but only an appearance. The distinction between reality and appearance is a very old one in philosophy, and not new to Vasiṣṭha alone. Even common-sense makes this distinction. From time immemorial philosophers have been distinguishing between some contents and aspects of experience as real and others as illusory, although the test of reality and appearance has been differently conceived by them. Nāgārjuna, Śrī-harṣa and Bradley are some of the greatest writers on the problem. In the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, however, we do not find anything like a logical discussion of the problem. What we find is only a vision of the problem which might have been later on developed into the *Anirvacanīya* philosophy of the *Advaita Vedānta*.

Mere objectivity or practical efficiency is no test of reality, according to Vasiṣṭha. The test of reality is eternal persistence or changeless continuity. There cannot be a beginning or end to that which is real. Nothing that begins to exist and comes to an end can be called real. And that which is not thus real is unreal, in the true sense, no matter if it appears. Reality and truth mean the same thing for Vasiṣṭha. The literal meaning



of the word *satya* (true) is that which *is* (from the root *sat*) ever. "That is true, and nothing else, which does not begin to exist, nor ceases to exist at any time, (but always continues to be). (V, 5, 9.) That alone is real even now which existed before the beginning and which will continue to exist after the end (of the manifestation of the world-process). (IV, 45, 46.) And how can that be real in the present which was not in the past and will not be in the future? (V, 5, 9.) For, that which was not in the past, and which will not be in the future cannot be real in the present even. (IV, 45, 45.) That which is can never come to end at any time." (III, 4, 52.)<sup>1</sup> It may also be noted here that Nāgārjuna and Gauḍa-pāda have given exactly the same test of reality. The former says: "How can that have a middle (*madhya*) which has no reality in a before (*agra*) or after (*avara*)? (*Madhyamika Karikas*, XI, 2); and the latter holds: "That which is naught at the beginning and is so also at the end, does necessarily not exist in the middle." (The *Maṇḍūkya-kārikas*, IV, 31.) Śaṅkara also says: "What is eternal cannot have a beginning, and whatever has a beginning is not eternal. (Śaṅkara's *Commentary on the Tail. Up.* Introduction.)

But what would be the character of those contents of our experience which have a beginning and an end, and endure only in the present? We cannot call them absolutely unreal, for an absolutely unreal thing can never exist. They cannot be called real, for strictly

<sup>1</sup> आदावन्ते च यन्नित्यं तत्सत्यं नाम नेतरत् ।

आदावन्ते च यत्सत्यं वर्तमाने सदेव तत् ॥

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति कीदृशी तस्य सत्यता ।

यदस्ति तस्य नाशोऽस्ति न कदाचन राघव ॥

speaking, that alone is real which ever continues to be, and so will never come to an end. That such contents, which have a beginning and an end, are countless in our experience cannot be denied without evoking ridicule. For, except probably the Self, there is nothing in our experience which has not had a beginning and which will not have an end. Vasiṣṭha thinks that they may be characterized as *mithya* (false), *bhṛānti-mātram* (mere illusion), words which may be translated as appearance, as the word has come in vogue in modern philosophy. Appearance is that which partakes both of reality and unreality, but which is neither absolutely. All the contents of our experience, thus, whether of dream or of waking consciousness, whether of short duration or of long, whether useful or otherwise, whether private or shared by others, are appearance according to this test of reality. They are called *mithya* (false), *sad-āsan-maya* (neither real nor unreal absolutely), for one who experiences them. As long as one experiences them, it will be ridiculous to call them unreal, for the unreal cannot be experienced, and absurd to call them real for they begin and cease to be experienced; or, they begin to exist and come to an end at some time or other. The world-experience as a whole also falls within the realm of appearance. For it too in the present form begins and ends in time. The individuality, which involves the assumption of a separate existence from the Absolute in which really we all live move and have our being, is an appearance, for it has its beginning in the will to be, and will have its end when it finds the true Self in the Absolute. The creative impulse in the Absolute itself is an appearance, for it too has an origin and merges in the Undifferentiated Absolute Whole, which never begins or ends to



exist, and therefore is truly real. Keeping these considerations in view we can understand the expressions of Vasiṣṭha and of other Advaitist thinkers with regard to the *mithyātvā* or illusoriness of the world without ridiculing or misunderstanding them. In the case of Vasiṣṭha we must also not forget that he is an idealist for whom all objects are ideas.

Here are some of the statements of Vasiṣṭha:

The world, he says, is neither real nor unreal: "The world is neither real nor unreal, but only an illusory appearance in the mind, like a hypnotic scene arisen at the same time in many minds. (III, 65, 6.) It is neither real nor unreal, but only appears as an illusion does. (III, 44, 27.) It appears as a snake appears in a rope. (III, 44, 41.) It has arisen like a network of dreams, which are neither real nor unreal." (VIa, 114, 20.)<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara says the same thing in a more technical manner: "The world neither is, nor is not, and so its nature is indescribable." (See Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 564.)

The world is real as well as unreal. "The world is real as well as unreal like the river of a mirage observed in the light of the sun. (III, 1, 19.) The world-experience partakes of both reality and unreality (*sad-asad-atmakam*). It is unreal as it does not endure for ever, and real because it appears and is experienced. It is like a dream which partakes both of reality and unreality.

<sup>1</sup> न सन्नासन्न संजातश्चेतसो जगतो भ्रमः ।

अथ धीसमवायानामिन्द्रजालमिवोत्थितः ॥

एवं न सन्नासदिदं भ्रान्तिमात्रं विभासते ॥

न तत्सत्यं न चासत्यं रज्जुसर्पभ्रमो यथा ॥

न सत्यं न च मिथ्यैव स्वप्नजालमिवोत्थितम् ॥



(III, 65, 5.) It is unreality appearing as real. It is an appearance (*pratibhanam*).” (III, 54, 21.)<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore more correct to call the world as an appearance, and as such, it is on par with all kinds of appearances from the point of view of the Ultimate Reality, such as the ordinary illusions of our every-day experience are. There is no difference whatsoever between the two. The contents of both are ideas in the mind, according to idealism, appearing to be existing outside as objects in their own right. Privacy of the so called illusions cannot differentiate them from the objects of the waking experience which are common and shared by all, for there are many illusions which are shared in common by all creatures, such as the experience of the sun being bigger in mornings and evenings, or as Vasiṣṭha has pointed out, the same contents of a hypnotic vision or a dream may at the same time be presented to many minds. The duration of their being experienced cannot also distinguish between the two sorts of appearances, for all durability of experience, according to Vasiṣṭha is relative, and, as we have already noted, the whole world-history which extends to centuries for us, is a moment's experience for the Absolute. Does the so called tangibility, intensity, hardness or stability differentiate between the two? No, for, the so-called illusory objects also appear, at the time of their being experienced, tangible, intense, hard and stable, just as the objects of the world do. Even effectiveness is not

<sup>1</sup> सतीवाऽप्यसती तापनद्या व लहरी चला ।

मनसेहेन्द्रजालश्रीर्जागती प्रवितन्यते ॥

असत्यमस्थैर्यवशात्सत्यं संप्रतिभासतः ।

यथा स्वप्नस्तथा चित्तं जगत्सदसदात्मकम् ।

असत्यमेव सत्याभं प्रतिभानमिदं स्थितम् ॥

a differentiating character between the two, for even dream objects are also effective as long as they are experienced. And the objects of the world too are not equally effective to all. Thus there is no difference between the ordinary illusory experiences of every-day life and the grand illusory experience of the Cosmos. So does Vasiṣṭha give them equal status of being illusory appearances, in the following passages:

"Thus know the entire objective world as well as the subjective ego, etc., to be merely an illusory appearance (IV, 1, 2); like the illusory water of a mirage (IV, 1, 7); like the kingdom of a day-dream (IV, 1, 12); like a snake appearing in place of a piece of rope (VIa, 101, 58); like a dream (III, 62, 51); like a magic city (III, 62, 5); like castles in the air (*gandharva-nagara*) like a second moon perceived by persons with diseased eyes (VIb, 190, 13); like the movements of trees and mountains on the shore perceived by a passenger in a boat; like the dance of a mountain (the illusion of a mountain being tossed up and down) seen when one is uneasy and feels dizzy (III, 41, 52); like the cutting of one's own head in a dream (III, 41, 53); like the illusion of water in a desert; like the idea of a bracelet in a piece of gold (III, 28, 15); like the whirling movements of trees seen by an intoxicated man. (III, 66, 8.) The world is nothing more than an illusion. (III, 66, 4.) The origin, the growth, the enjoyment, and the involution of the world, all are illusory appearances." (III, 67, 76.)<sup>1</sup> According to Aśva-ghoṣa also

<sup>1</sup> एवं तावदिदं विद्धि दृश्यं जगदिति स्थितम् ।

अहं चेत्याद्याकारं भ्रान्तिमात्रमसन्मयम् ॥

मृगतृष्णाऽम्बिव्यासत्यं सत्यवत्प्रत्ययप्रदम् ॥

अनुभूतं मनोराज्यमिवास्त्यमवास्तवम् ॥

*Tathatā* is the only reality, and "All phenomena in the world are nothing but illusory manifestations of the mind (*ālaya-vijñāna*) and have no reality of their own." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 135-136.) Nāgārjuna also holds: "The production, the stay and the destruction all are like a magic scene (*māya*), like a dream, and like a city in sky (*gandharva-nagara*)."  
(*Mādhyamika-kārikās*, VII, 34.) A similar view is advocated by Gauḍa-pāda in his *Maṇḍukya-kārikās*. (See *Kārikās*, IV, 31; II, 31; IV, 33-39; II, 1-3; II, 6-7, 9.)

Individuality is also an appearance like all other illusions. "The Jīva is like a second moon appearing to a person of diseased vision." (III, 100, 35.)<sup>1</sup> The coming of the creative power to consciousness is an act

मनोव्यामोह एवेदं रज्ज्वामहिभयं यथा ।  
स्वप्नेन्द्रजालपुरवत्संकषेहापुराद्रिवत् ॥  
संकल्पवदसत्यैव भाति सर्गानुभूतिभूः ।  
स्वप्नार्थमृगतृष्णाम्बुदीन्दुसंकल्पितार्थवत् ॥  
यथा नौयानसंरम्भे वृक्षपर्वतवेपनम् ।  
यथा स्वधातुसंक्षोभे पूर्वपर्वतनर्तनम् ॥  
यथा समञ्जसं स्वप्ने स्वशिरःप्रविकर्तनम् ।  
मिथ्यैवैवमियं प्रौढा भ्रान्तिरातत्तत्पिणी ॥  
यथा मरौ जलं बुद्धं कटकत्वं च हेमनि ।  
असत्सदिव भातीदं तथा दृश्यत्वमात्मनि ॥  
यथा मदवशाद्भ्रान्तान्क्षीवः पश्यति पादपान् ॥  
पत्रमात्रादृते नान्यत्कदल्या विद्यते यथा ।  
भ्रममात्रादृते नान्यजगतो विद्यते तथा ॥  
अलीकमिदमुत्पन्नमलीकं च विवर्धते ।  
अलीकमेव स्वदते तथाऽलीकं विलीयते ॥

<sup>1</sup> आत्मैवानात्मवदिह जीवो जगति राजते ।  
दीन्दुत्वमिव दुष्टेः सन्नासञ्च समुत्थितम् ॥



in time. It has also to recoil back to the Absolute at some time or other. And when merged in the Absolute it is one with It, and nothing separate from It. Judged by the test of reality, the creative power as such of the Absolute is also an appearance. It is not a reality, because it does not endure eternally as such. As creative activity, it has a beginning and an end in the Absolute. "It is called *Avidya*, *Maya*, great Ignorance from which the poison of the world originates. (V, 13, 89.) This Ignorance appears clearly and is also said to be, but in reality is devoid of reality, although it is seen to be something substantial. (III, 113, 15-17.) It manifests itself in the world of ideas, in thousand branches, so to say, yet in itself it is an unreal appearance, not real from the absolute point of view. (III, 113, 33.) The appearance of all objects is called *Avidya*. It does not exist in reality, as no water really exists in a mirage-river. (VIb, 52, 5.) (*Vide*, Gauḍa-pāda: *Karikas*, IV, 58.) From the Absolute point of view of reality *Avidya* is unreal; The Brahman alone which is beginningless, endless, changeless, is real, for It exists throughout the past, present and future." (VIa, 40, 11.)<sup>1</sup> Even now, if one could grasp the idea

एषा ह्यविद्या कथिता मायैषा सा निगद्यते ।  
 परमेतत्तदज्ञानं संसारादिविषप्रदम् ॥  
 दृश्यते प्रकराभासा सदर्थं नोपयुज्यते ।  
 अन्तःशून्याऽपि सर्वत्र दृश्यते सारमुन्दरी ॥  
 मनोराज्यमिवाकारभासुरा सत्यवर्जिता ।  
 सहस्रशतशखाऽपि न किञ्चित्परमार्थतः ॥  
 इयं दृश्यभरभ्रान्तिर्नन्वविद्येति चोच्यते ।  
 वस्तुतो विद्यते नैषा तापनद्यां यथा पयः ॥  
 ब्रह्मतत्त्वमिदं सर्वमासीदस्ति भविष्यति ।  
 निर्विकारमनाद्यन्तं नाविद्यास्तीति निश्चयः ॥

of the total Experience being one Undifferentiated Homogeneous Whole, he will not experience any existence of the creative activity functioning, for in the Absolute all distinctions are balanced against one another and are unified in one Homogeneous Unity at all times, as we have already mentioned. Bradley has beautifully put the same idea as: "All differences come together in the Absolute. In this, how we do not know, all distinctions are fused, and all relations disappear." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 203.) So does Vasiṣṭha say: "When the correct knowledge of the Absolute dawns, you will know that neither the world is (real), nor the *Avidya* is (real)." (VIb, 52, 7.)<sup>1</sup> For, as Hegel believed, every thesis (affirmation) has its antithesis (negation), and both are synthesized in the Absolute; or as Bradley has put it: "The reality owns the discordance and discrepancy of appearance, but it possesses also much else in which the jarring character is swallowed by and is dissolved in fuller harmony." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 192). In the Brahman of Vasiṣṭha, the Creative Power and the Destructive Power (*nāśa-sakti*) are ever fused in a state of balanced calmness. (*Vide*, III, 100, 5.)

Another word used for the Creative Power of the Absolute is *Maya* (*mā*=not, *ya*=that). This name is given to it because "It is not (*mā*) absolutely real, but an appearance." (IV, 41, 34.) If one could raise himself to the Experience of the Absolute, he will realize that *Maya* is only an appearance for those who do not know the Reality in which it is ever negated by its opposite, and so has no absolute reality. "It appears

<sup>1</sup> कुत एषा कथं चेति विकल्पाननुदाहरन् ।

नेदमेषा न चास्तीति स्वयं ज्ञास्यसि बोधतः ॥

as long as its unreality is not recognized. It ceases to function in the experience of one who has realized its unreality in the Absolute." (IV, 41, 15.)<sup>1</sup> Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan, similarly, writes: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, our body decays, our senses change and our empirical egos are built up before our eyes. None of these is ultimately real. The abstract expression of this phenomenality of the world is *Mayā*." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 564.)

Thus every finite, definite, particular and temporary form of the Absolute Reality, is an appearance, no matter what its character and durability may be. Judged from the Absolute standard of reality all forms are equally unreal. There may be degrees of reality and unreality in the realm of appearances, but from the Absolute standpoint all are equally unreal. Yet for those who have not yet attained to the philosophical consciousness (*jñāna*, *bodha*), and so have not yet realized that the world is only an appearance, it is intensely real. Every concept, every object, everything in the world is considered real by them, as those, who have not yet realized that the contents of their ordinary illusory experience are mere appearances, think them to be real. "The world is as real as a thunderbolt for those who have not yet extended their vision to the Absolute Reality, and so do not know the truth. (III, 42, 1.) It is as real and perplexing to the ignorant as a ghost teasing a child unto death (III, 42, 2); as a mirage-water tantalizing a thirsty deer (III, 42, 3); as the suffering of one's own death in

<sup>1</sup> वस्तुतः किल नास्त्येषा विभात्येषा न वेक्षिता ॥

ईदृशी राम मायेयं या स्वनाशेन हर्षदा ।

न लक्ष्यते स्वभावोऽस्याः प्रेक्ष्यमाणैव नश्यति ॥



a dream (III, 42, 4); as a mere ornament-conception in gold to the fascinated (III, 42, 5); as the vision of cities in the sky to those who are ignorant of their unreality. (III, 42, 6.) The long illusion of the world is experienced as real only by the *rajasa* (people full of desires and ambitions) and *tamasa* (grossly ignorant and merged in objectivity) creatures." (V, 5, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

The contents of this chapter will be more intelligible when the next chapter is gone through, for appearances are known as such only when they are negated.

<sup>1</sup> यस्त्वबुद्धमतिर्मूढो रूढो न वितते पदे ।  
 वज्रसारमिदं तस्य जगदस्यसदेव सत् ॥  
 यथा बालस्य बेतालो मृतिपर्यन्तदुःखदः ।  
 असदेव सदाकारं तथा मूढमतेर्जगत् ॥  
 ताप एव यथा वारि मृगाणां भ्रमकारणम् ।  
 असत्यमेव सत्यामं तथा मूढमतेर्जगत् ॥  
 यथा स्वप्नमृतिर्जन्तोरसत्या सत्यरूपिणी ।  
 अर्थक्रियाकरी भाति तथा मूढधियां जगत् ॥  
 अव्युत्पन्नस्य कनके कानके कटके यथा ।  
 कटकझत्तिरेवास्ति न मनागपि हेमधीः ॥  
 तथाऽज्ञस्य पुरागारनगनागेन्द्रभासुरा ।  
 इयं दृश्यद्गोवास्ति न त्वन्या परमार्थदृक् ॥  
 दीर्घसंसारमायेयं राम राजसतामसैः ।  
 धार्यते जन्तुभिर्नित्यं सुस्तम्भैरिव मण्डपः ॥

## CHAPTER XV

### THE ABSOLUTE POINT-OF-VIEW

HITHERTO we have learnt what Vasiṣṭha has told us of the Absolute Reality from our point-of-view (*drṣṭi*), i.e., from the standpoint of individuality, objective world, creation, etc. Now we shall learn what he says of the Absolute in Itself, so far as anything can be said of It. For, in the first place, it is rather difficult, if not impossible, to know the Absolute as such. "Fully to realize the Absolute", as Bradley puts it, "is for the finite beings impossible. In order thus to know, we should have to be, and then we should not exist." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 159.) Secondly, if somehow known or experienced in mystic experience, as Indian thinkers have held, no description of It can be given in language, for, as we have already seen, all our terms are relative and incapable of giving an idea of what the hearer himself has not already experienced. *Mauna* (silence) would in that case be the inevitable course. Yet something has to be spoken about the Absolute as such in order that those who have no intuition of It may be helped to have it. Vasiṣṭha therefore resorts to the method of denying what the Absolute cannot be, what the Absolute does not experience, what as such does not exist in the Absolute. A little consideration will convince one that all that we have noticed to be mere appearances cannot as such exist in the

Absolute Reality, for they are definite forms that have a beginning and an end, and even at the time of their appearance they are balanced by their opposites existing also in the Absolute, both fusing into the Homogeneous Undifferentiated Whole—the Brahman. The Brahman cannot be called either of the two opposites, because It is at the same time the other. No particular form, no particular movement, no particular individuality, no particular state, can be said to be existing as such in the Absolute, for there it meets also its opposite, its antithesis, its negation, and thus gets neutralized and fused, or as Bradley says, transmuted, into the homogeneous (*eka-rasa*), undifferentiated (*akhaṇḍa*) Brahman. Vasiṣṭha has compared the Absolute with a marble-block, in which there are thousands of statues potentially existing. In the block, the presence of that portion of the block which an artist would extricate from it in order to actualize a particular statue together with that portion which would constitute the statue, negates itself as well as the statue, and leaves the block as an undifferentiated mass. In the same way, all appearances lose their distinctive characters by existing together with others in the Absolute, leaving It as pure Unity of Experience, as Bradley has also put it: "There is but one Reality, and its being consists in Experience. In this one whole all appearances come together, and in coming together they in various degrees lose their distinctive natures." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 455.) Such an Absolute, we must not forget, is not the abstract unity which is arrived at by stripping off all concrete things from it, a concept to which we have objected in a previous chapter. The Absolute of Vasiṣṭha is the Unity of the whole within which all things are potentially, nay, actually, present in case they are hypostatized, but are



not experienced as such in the One Indivisible Experience, in which the subject-object distinction is obliterated. No category of our finite experience can describe It. It is only when we cease to be fond of particulars, when we cease to be interested in this or that, when our interests and emotions are universalized, when neither of the two opposites, of the pair of thesis and antithesis, enchants us, that we can have a mystic experience of this ever existing state. It is not absolutely impossible to realize this experience, as Bradley thinks it to be so, for every finite being has its root in the infinite ocean of the Absolute, and the very moment the finite being gives up, negates, forgets, ceases to pursue, intellectually, morally and emotionally, all that makes it finite, the experience of the Infinite dawns upon him. He is then transmuted into the Absolute Reality, in which he finds no trace of any of the appearances of the finite experience. Then he will find no evil, no bondage, no ignorance, no change, no world, no individuality, no God, no freedom, no stagnation, no *pralaya* (dissolution), and no objectivity, for all of them are relative conceptions, ever neutralized, fused and blended in the Absolute Experience, nothing more about which can be said. With this introduction we proceed to learn what Vasiṣṭha has said in connection with the first and last concept of his philosophy.

The appearances are experienced to exist so long as the Absolute is not realized, and as long as finitude continues. The various aspects of finitude are pointed out by Vasiṣṭha in the following passages: "The world of appearance is experienced as long as there is ignorance of the Absolute; as long as there is trust in the forms of the world; as long as one believes himself to be other than the Absolute; as long as the body is

believed to be the Self, and the objective things are identified with the Self; as long as the idea of "mine" exists; as long as the higher standpoint has not been realized through association with the wise; as long as ignorance has not vanished; as long as the idea of the world has not become weaker by right vision; as long as spiritual blindness and desire for the objects of senses continue, and the poison of hopes and expectation lasts in the personality." (VIa, 2, 30-35.)<sup>1</sup> Compare with this what As'va-ghoṣa says: "The waves are stirred up by the wind, but water remains the same. When the wind ceases, the motion of the waves subsides; but the water remains the same . . . Likewise when the mind . . . is stirred up by the wind of ignorance (*avidyā*), the waves of mentality make their appearance. These three (*i.e.*, the mind, ignorance and mentality), however, have no (absolute) existence. . . . When ignorance is annihilated, the awakened mentality is tranquillized, whilst the essence of wisdom remains unmolested." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 67-68.) Schiller

- <sup>1</sup> यावदज्ञानकलना यावदब्रह्मभावना ।  
 यावदास्था जगज्जाले तावच्चित्तादिकल्पना ॥  
 देहे यावदहंभावो दृश्येऽस्मिन्यावदात्मता ।  
 यावन्ममेदमित्यास्था तावच्चित्तादिविभ्रमः ॥  
 यावन्नोदितमुच्चैस्त्वं सज्जनासङ्गसङ्गतः ।  
 यावन्मौर्ख्यं न संक्षीणं तावच्चित्तादिनिम्नता ॥  
 यावच्छिथिलतां यातं नेदं भुवनभावनम् ।  
 सम्यग्दर्शनशक्त्याऽन्तस्तावच्चित्तादयः स्फुटाः ॥  
 यावदङ्गत्वमन्धत्वं वैवश्यं विषयाशया ।  
 मौर्ख्यान्मोहसमुच्छ्रायस्तावच्चित्तादिकल्पना ॥  
 यावदाशाविषामोदः परिस्फुरति हृदये ।  
 प्रविचारचकोरोऽन्तर्न तावत्प्रविशत्यलम् ॥

also suggests that the appearance of the world is relative to our mind: "Thus the objective world in Space and Time would . . . represent merely a state or condition of our mind, which need not exist at all except for a being in that condition." (Schiller: *Riddle of the Sphinx*, p. 273.)

The ignorance, on account of which we take the appearances to be real, vanishes when knowledge of the Truth dawns. "Ignorance seems to be endlessly existing only so long as one does not know it to be so, like an illusory river in a desert. (VIb, 160, 8.) As on the rise of the sun the night vanishes somewhere, so also at the rise of discriminative consciousness ignorance vanishes. (III, 114, 9.) False appearances exist as long as they are not recognized to be so, and when they are recognized to be so, through right thinking, they vanish." (VIa, 10, 36.)<sup>1</sup>

The world-illusion ceases to be experienced by one "when there is no interest in sense-enjoyments; when the fetters of expectation are cut; when one is at peace by giving up all hankerings; when the vision of the Absolute has arisen; when the individuality is annihilated (or merged) in the Absolute as butter in fire." (VIa, 2, 36-41.)<sup>2</sup> Compare what a modern writer says: "When

<sup>1</sup> अविवेकमविज्ञाता चिरानन्ताऽवभासते ।  
परिज्ञाता तु नास्त्येव मृगतृष्णानदी यथा ॥  
यथोदिते दिनकरे कापि याति तमस्विनी ।  
तथा विवेकेऽभ्युदिते काप्यविद्या विलीयते ॥  
एवमालोक्ष्यमानैषा कापि याति पलायते ।  
असद्रूपा ह्यवस्तुत्वाद् दृश्यते ह्यविचारणात् ॥

<sup>2</sup> भोगेष्वनास्थमनसः शीतलामलनिवृत्तेः ।  
छिन्नाशापाशजालस्य क्षीयते चित्तविभ्रमः ॥  
तृष्णामोहपरित्यागाभित्यशीतलसंविदः ।  
पुंसः प्रशान्तचित्तस्य प्रबुद्धा त्यक्तचित्तभूः ॥



we gain the consciousness of unity with the Infinite Perfection, the consciousness of time and space, as limitations will disappear; and the consciousness of the relative, imperfect world, as such will disappear. In very truth—in reality—they never existed." (Charles Wase: *The Inner Teachings and Yoga*, p. 57.)

By coming to the true vision we do not "destroy" the appearances. The term destruction is not suitable here, according to Vasiṣṭha. For, destruction is a meaningless term. We cannot destroy the real, and to destroy the unreal is meaningless. There is no destruction in the universe. "The concept of destruction (*nāśa*) or the opposite can have meaning only with regard to real things, but that which is not real cannot be destroyed. The word is meaningless in that case. (III, 21, 58.) Does the term destruction have any meaning in the case of the ceasing of an illusory snake from being experienced in place of a piece of rope, when true knowledge is acquired? (III, 21, 59.) That which is absolutely unreal cannot be destroyed, because it is already non-existent (VIb, 213, 11), and that which is real cannot be made unreal." (VIb, 213, 12.)<sup>1</sup>

मावितानन्तचित्तस्वरूपरूपान्तरात्मनः ।

स्वान्तावलीनजगतः शान्तो जीवादिविभ्रमः ॥

असम्यग्दर्शने शान्ते मिथ्याभ्रमकरात्मनि ।

उदिते परमादित्ये परमार्थैकदर्शने ॥

अपुनर्दर्शनायैव दग्धसंशुष्कपर्णवत् ।

चित्तं विगलितं विद्धि बह्वौ घृतलवं यथा ॥

<sup>1</sup> यदस्ति नाम तत्रैव नाशानाशक्रमो भवेत् ।

वस्तुतो यच्च नास्त्येव नाशः स्यात्तस्य कीदृशः ॥

रज्ज्वां सर्पभ्रमे नष्टे सत्यबोधवशात्सुत ।

सर्पो न नष्ट उन्नष्टो वेत्येवं कैव सा कथा ॥

Where do the objective forms then go when they are no longer experienced? They merge in the Absolute from which they arose. "In the cases of dreams, illusions and fancies, the objective forms merge in the consciousness when the scene ends, as the currents of air lose themselves in air. (III, 57, 44.) So when the tendency of Consciousness to experience appearances comes to an end, those appearances merge into Consciousness." (III, 57, 46.)<sup>1</sup>

This being the nature of the appearances, we cannot say that they exist as such in the Absolute Brahman. They are all relative to the experiencer. "In Reality there is no world-appearance. Only the Brahman exists." (IV, 40, 30.)<sup>2</sup> This is the Ultimate Truth. "The doctrine of all the *Adhyātma Śāstras* (spiritual lore) which supercedes all others is that neither there is *Avidyā* nor *Māyā*, but only the Brahman in which all these distinctions and processes are merged. (VIa, 125, 1.) All this is Brahman, eternal, undecaying mass of Experience. There is no other thing like the mind (as such) therein at any time. (III, 114, 14.) All this (world) is the Absolute Brahman (III, 4, 68), all (plurality) is the One, without

न विनश्यत एवेदं ततः पुत्र न विद्यते ।

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ॥

यत्तु वस्तुत एवास्ति न कदाचन किंचन ।

तदभावात्म तद्राम कथं नाम विनश्यति ॥

<sup>1</sup> स्वप्नभ्रमेऽथ संकल्पे पदार्थाः पर्वतादयः ।

संविदोऽन्तर्मिलन्त्येते स्पन्दनान्यनिले यथा ॥

स्वप्नाद्यर्थाविभासेन संविदेव स्फुरत्यलम् ।

अस्फुरन्ती तु तेनैव यात्येकत्वं तदात्मिका ॥

<sup>2</sup> वस्तुतस्तु जगन्नास्ति सर्वं ब्रह्मैव केवलम् ॥

differentiations, without being broken in parts, which never grows old, never dies or decays. (III, 84, 26.) It is Consciousness from which the object has not been separated (*i.e.*, Consciousness in which the distinction of subject and object has not yet arisen), and which is universally present in all." (III, 114, 16.)<sup>1</sup> The Absolute is thus the Unity of Experience in which all distinctions of our limited vision, which start with the hypostatization of the creative force, are ever blended into a distinctionless Homogeneity. It being the Infinite and Eternal Whole, all processes, distinctions and multiplicity appear only in relation to one another, and not as such in the Absolute. To understand this point let us think of a big hexagon. As a hexagon it is one figure, but our imagination may see within it thousands of other figures which are separate and distinct from one another, having peculiar characters different from those of others. Think again, of two colours blending into a third in which both lose their peculiar characteristics, yet probably also retain them in themselves. Dr. Ribot's studies in the phenomena of personality (*Vide*, Ribot: *Diseases of Personality*) have convinced him that human personality is a colony of lives rather than a simple spiritual entity. Yet we all feel a unity of life within us. In the same way

- <sup>1</sup> सिद्धान्तोऽध्यात्मशास्त्राणां सर्वापह्नव एव हि ।  
 नाविद्याऽस्तीह नो माया शान्तं ब्रह्मेदमक्रमम् ॥  
 सर्वं च खल्विदं ब्रह्म नित्यं चिद्धनमक्षतम् ।  
 कल्पनाऽन्या मनोनाम्नी विद्यते न हि काचन ॥  
 परं ब्रह्मैव तत्सर्वमजरामरमव्ययम् ॥  
 सर्वमेकमनाद्यन्तमविभागमखण्डितम् ॥  
 केवलं केवलाभासं सर्वसामान्यमक्षतम् ।  
 चेत्यानुपातरहितं चिन्मात्रमिह विद्यते ॥



we may think of the Absolute. Vasiṣṭha's Absolute is the Ultimate Unity of the entire Universe, a Unitary Experience in which imagination can see any figures, any forms, like an artist's eye seeing countless statues in a piece of stone, yet no statue as such exists for the stone. The destruction or origination of a particular ornament is not that of gold. The formation or dissolution of a bubble or of countless bubbles is not that of water which as such is never formed or dissolved by the formation or dissolution of the bubbles within it. The formation or dissolution of the various world-orbs cannot be, in the like manner, attributed to the Absolute as such. The history of any such world is not the history of the Absolute as such. "The Absolute has no history of its own, though it contains histories without number." (Bradely: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 499.) "Evolution may be a part of our cosmic process, but the Absolute is not subject to it." (*Ibid.*, p. 343.) So also birth, death, growth, decay, bondage or liberation, all are true only in the case of the individuals imagined or hypostatized within the Absolute, but have nothing to do with the Absolute as such. It is never bound, never liberated, for both are relative conceptions, and as such are meaningless with regard to the Infinite Absolute Whole. Bradley says: "The Absolute has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruits and blossoms." (*Appearance and Reality*, Chap. XXVI.) Vasiṣṭha will probably say that not only leaves, fruits and blossoms, but also in a way their ripening, falling down and decay, and therefore none of these exclusively are present in and for the Absolute. He very often calls the Absolute *Sunya* (Void), for he thinks that all positive determinations are ever met by negations in the Absolute.

It is like a zero, but not an absolutely empty zero, but a zero in which the entire universe of positives and negatives is potentially present. It is that Experience in which the *satta* and *asatta* (being and non-being) of anything and everything is present at the same time, leaving It always in a balanced Repose (*Santam*). It is only when we have grasped this idea that we shall be able to understand many of the mysterious statements of Vasiṣṭha which we have reserved for this chapter. Here are some of them:

"This universe is Pure Consciousness (*suddha-bodha*), without any contradiction. There is no bondage, no freedom, no ignorance, and no thinking. (III, 21, 72.) For the enlightened ones like us, nothing is produced, nothing is destroyed. All is Peaceful, unborn Real. (VIb, 146, 11.) In the Absolute Peace, this as such (*ittham-idamtaṃ*), not even in name, exists at any time. (III, 119, 25.) Here, nothing is born or dead in all the three worlds. There is no change of any state of existence at any time. (III, 114, 15.) There is no world, nor worlds. The whole is a balanced state. (III, 13, 51.) In that there is neither support nor anything supported; neither subject (*draṣṭā*), nor object (*dṛśyam*); neither the Brahmā, nor the Cosmos; nor is there any useless talk. (III, 13, 50.) That the world is created by the Absolute, or originated from the Absolute, is only a conventional expression which has no significance from the Absolute point of view, but is used in philosophy and practical life. (IV, 40, 17.) The Absolutely Real is only the balanced Whole. It is neither object nor subject, nor their relation; neither matter nor consciousness (spirit); neither being nor non-being. (III, 4, 70.) In reality there is neither waking, nor sleep,

nor dream; neither the fourth state nor any state beyond the fourth. It is the ether (*ākāśa*) of harmony." (VIb, 167, 18.)<sup>1</sup> It is, as P. N. Mukhopādhyāya has put it, the "level of no stress, zero potential, absolute homogeneity, all Consciousness, all being and all bliss." (P. N. Mukhopādhyāya: *Approaches to Truth*, p. 420.) Nāgārjuna also begins his *Mādhyamika-sūtra* with a similar statement: "There is no death, no birth, no destruction, no persistence; no oneness, no manyness, no coming in, no departing." (*Bibliotheca, Buddhica*, Vol. IV, p. 3.)

The Absolute as such cannot be in any way the creator (*karta*) of the world. "It is only a ridiculous

<sup>1</sup> तस्मान्नैव विचारोऽस्ति नाविद्याऽस्ति न बन्धनम् ।

न मोक्षोऽस्ति निराबाधं शुद्धबोधमिदं जगत् ॥

बुधानामस्मदादीनां न किञ्चिन्नाम जायते ।

न च नश्यति वा किञ्चित्सर्वं शान्तमजं च सत् ॥

परे शान्ते परं नाम स्थितमित्थमिदंतया ।

नेह सर्गो न सर्गाख्या काचिदस्ति कदाचन ॥

न जायते न म्रियते किञ्चिदत्र जगत्क्षये ।

न च भावविकाराणां सत्ता कचन विद्यते ॥

न जगन्नापि जगती शान्तमेवाखिलं स्थितम् ।

ब्रह्मैव कचति स्वच्छमित्थमात्माऽऽत्मनाऽऽत्मनि ॥

नाधेयं तत्र नाधारो न दृश्यं न च द्रष्टृता ।

ब्रह्माण्डं नास्ति न ब्रह्मा न च वैतण्डिका कचित् ॥

तेन जातं ततो जातमितीयं रचना गिराम् ।

शास्त्रसंख्यवहारार्थं न राम परमार्थतः ॥

न दृश्यमस्ति सद्रूपं न द्रष्टा न च दर्शनम् ।

न शून्यं न जडं नो चिच्छान्तमेवेदमाततम् ॥

वस्तुतस्त्वस्ति न स्वप्नो न जाग्रन्न मुषुप्तता ।

न तुर्यं न ततोऽतीतं सर्वं शान्तं परं नमः ॥



statement of those who have not got sufficient understanding that the Absolute (*Īśvara*) is the creator of the world. For, how can the Infinite, unopposed, Self-contained, Formless God be said to be the creator of the world? (VIa, 98, 8.) How can the Brahman be the creator of the world, in which (as such) the categories of agency, action, cause, instrument and seed have no meaning; and which is beyond being known or discussed?" (VIa, 95, 13.)<sup>1</sup> Creation might be, as Kant suggested, a work of a finite God, but it can certainly not be that of the Infinite Absolute which is the Whole Self-satisfied and Self-contained Experience. Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan similarly says: "Nor can we ascribe action to the infinite, since all action implies an end to be realized, an object to be achieved." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 567.)

Can the Absolute be said to undergo change? No. Change (*vikāra*) is a meaningless concept for the Absolute. It is a concept only of relative validity. It is only the forms or states of something that can be said to change, if at all they can be said so, but the thing, whose forms or states change, must endure. To say that the thing changes is meaningless, otherwise. When, for example, we say that water changes into liquid, solid, and gaseous forms, we do not mean that water as such has changed into something else. If it were so, our judgment would not be the same. The subject of our sentence would not in that case be water. Forms too cannot strictly be said to change.

<sup>1</sup> अनाख्योऽप्रतिघः स्वात्मा निगृह्णारो य ईश्वरः ।

स करोति जगदिति हासायैव वचोऽधियाम् ॥

अकर्तृकर्मकरणमकारणमवीजकम् ।

अप्रतर्क्यमविज्ञेयं ब्रह्म कर्तुं कथं भवेत् ॥

For, in order to say that one form has changed into another, we presuppose some aspect of the previous form persisting unchanged into the next. If one form is totally absent in the other, we cannot say that the previous form has changed into the subsequent one. In that case it will not be a change or *vikāra*, but only a series of appearance and disappearance of a number of forms. Change is therefore a self-contradictory concept, and can never be applicable to the Absolute, which as such never ceases to be. "Change means the transformation of something into another, which never returns back to its original form, as a change of milk into curd." (VIa, 49, 2.) Now, "Curd can never be reverted to the form of milk. But the Brahman continues to be the same throughout the origin, appearance and decay of the world. It cannot therefore be said to change as milk changes into curd. The Brahman is the undifferentiated whole. It cannot be said to be changing by the re-arrangement of its constituents. The Self never becomes a non-Self, as it knows no beginning nor an end. The Absolute is not under the control of the changes of states, as It is formless, eternal Unity. (VIa, 49, 2-4, 8, 9.) The change of a changeless being into the changeful would only mean its destruction. (VIb, 195, 14.) The One Infinite Whole cannot be said to be the cause of production of anything (IV, 40, 26), for there cannot arise anything else from that which is already all, which is everywhere. (IV, 40, 34.) A thing is only that which is before the beginning of any of its forms and after the end of that form. The form in which it appears is only an appearance due to our ignorance (of the real unchanging nature of the thing). (VIa, 49, 7.) The momentary form of something which is

uniformly the same is only an illusory appearance. That which continues to be the same cannot be said to change." (VIa, 49, 5.)<sup>1</sup> Gold as such cannot undergo any change in spite of the change of the forms of ornaments into which it may be cast one after another. It is gold at every moment and in every form. The forms come and go, appear and disappear, and so are not real and valuable for one who cares only for gold as such, whatever value they may have for those whose interests are limited to the unreal forms. For the Infinite Absolute as such there is no experience of any change of forms. Bradley also thinks: "Partial changes are no changes, but

<sup>1</sup> अपुनःप्रागवस्थानं यत्स्वरूपविपर्ययः ।  
 तद्विकारादिकं तात यत्क्षीरादिषु वर्तते ॥  
 पयस्तां पुनरभ्येति दधित्वान्न पुनः पयः ।  
 बुद्धमाद्यन्तमध्येषु ब्रह्म ब्रह्मैव निर्मलम् ॥  
 क्षीरादेरिव तेनास्ति ब्रह्मणो न विकारिता ।  
 अनाद्यन्तविभागस्य न चैषोऽवयविक्रमः ॥  
 आत्मा त्वाद्यन्तमध्येषु समः सर्वत्र सर्वदा ।  
 स्वमप्यन्यत्वमायाति नात्मतत्त्वं कदाचन ॥  
 अरूपत्वात्तथैकत्वान्नित्यत्वादयमीश्वरः ।  
 वशं भावविकाराणां न कदाचन गच्छति ॥  
 न चाविकारमजरं सविकारं क्षयाद्भूते ॥  
 एकमेव ह्यनन्तत्वार्त्तिकं कथं जनयिष्यति ॥  
 सर्वस्मात्सर्वंगात्तस्मादनन्ताद्ब्रह्मणः पदात् ।  
 नान्यार्त्तिकचित्संभवति तदुत्थं यत्तदेव तत् ॥  
 यादृगाद्यन्तयोर्वस्तु तादृगेव तदुच्यते ।  
 मध्ये यस्य यदन्यत्वं तदबोधाद्विजृम्भितम् ॥  
 समस्याद्यन्तयोर्वयं दृश्यते विकृतिः क्षणात् ।  
 संविदः संभ्रमं विद्धि नाविकारेऽस्ति विक्रिया ॥



counterbalance one another within a whole which persists unaltered." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 220.)

The Absolute cannot even be said to be the cause of any effect. The concepts of cause and effect are only relative, and may hold good, if at all, in the realm of appearances. The definitions of cause given either by Indian or Western philosophers fail to be applicable to the Infinite Whole. The very first requirement of a cause is that we should be able to differentiate it from the effect. Secondly, the cause is said to precede the effect. But how can the Eternal and Infinite Whole be said to be different from anything, for It is immanent in everything? Nor can it be said to precede in time something else, before the occurrence of which it must have terminated. One form may be said to be the cause of another form, but the formless substance of all forms can never be the cause of any of the forms, in the usual sense of the term. "The Brahman rests in Itself. It is neither cause nor seed. (VIa, 96, 26.) How can causality hold good in the case of that which is nameless, formless, and without any appearance? (VIa, 96, 28.) The Unborn Experience, which is ever full of Joy has no reason to act. (VIb, 10, 10.) The Absolute Brahman, which is a beginningless and endless Void without any form cannot be the cause of the objective world which has form and is not Absolute. (VIb, 53, 17.) The effect is never different in nature from the cause anywhere." (III, 18, 18.) Moreover, "If the main cause appears to be something different in an effect, that is due to the necessary conditions (*sahakāri-karāṇas*). (III, 18, 20.) But in the Brahman all the so called accessory conditions are ever negated. The Brahman, therefore, is not the cause of the

world." (III, 21, 37.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan says: "The relation of cause and effect cannot be applied to the relation of the Brahman and the world, since cause has meaning only in relation to the finite modes of being, where there is succession. We cannot say that the Brahman is the cause and the world is the effect, for this would be to distinguish the Brahman from the world and to make it into a thing related to another thing. Again the world is finite and conditioned, and how can the infinite unconditioned be its cause? If the finite is the limited and transitory, then the infinite, as the limit of the finite, is itself finite and not infinite." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 567.) And also, "Causality has no meaning apart from change, . . . It is certainly useful within the limits of experience, but we cannot regard it as of absolute validity." (*Ibid.*, p. 100.) Paulsen also similarly holds: "There is really no causal relation between the metaphysical element (the will) and the physical

संस्थितं सर्वदा सर्वे सर्वाकारमिवोदितम् ।  
 अदृश्यत्वादलभ्यत्वान्न तत्कार्यं न कारणम् ॥  
 आख्यानाख्यास्वरूपस्य निराभासप्रमादृशः ।  
 सतो वाऽप्यसतो वाऽथ कथं कारणता भवेत् ॥  
 नित्यानन्दतयाऽजस्य कारणं नास्ति कार्यकृत ॥  
 न च शून्यमनाद्यन्तं जगतः कारणं भवेत् ।  
 ब्रह्मामूर्तिं समूर्तस्य दृश्यस्याब्रह्मरूपिणः ॥  
 न हि कारणतः कार्यमुदेत्यसदृशं क्वचित् ॥  
 मुख्यकारणवैचित्र्यं किञ्चित्त्रावलोक्यते ॥  
 न ब्रह्मजगतामस्ति कार्यकारणतोदयः ।  
 कारणानामभावेन सर्वेषां सहकारिणाम् ॥

one. Such a relation obtains between objects, but not between a thing in itself and its phenomenon." (Paulsen: *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 163.)

The world of appearances cannot also be said to be existing in the Absolute as a tree exists in its seed. For, in the Absolute all the appearances are perfectly fused with their opposites, leaving It as a perfectly undifferentiated Unitary mass of Experience. A seed is not a satisfactory example of the Unity of the Absolute, for, it still retains form and multiplicity within, which the Absolute as such does not. In It all forms and multiplicity are entirely negated. "The statement that the objective world exists in the Absolute as a tree exists within a seed is indicative of one's ignorance and childishness. (IV, 1, 21.) How can that which is so subtle as to be beyond the reach of mind and senses, be the seed of the worlds? (IV, 1, 25.) How can the world, the mountains, the oceans and the sky be said to be existing within the Absolute, which is pure void, subtler even than ether? (IV, 1, 28.) It may be sensible to say that the tree exists in a seed, because both are *sakara* (have form), but to say that the world of forms exists in the formless Absolute is absurd." (IV, 1, 33.) Moreover, "When a seed manifests into a full tree, it loses its own form and existence. But that is not the case with the Absolute which ever continues to be existing in Its unchanged nature behind each appearance, whether the latter is seed or fruit. (IV, 18, 24.) Again, a tree can develop out of a seed only under the influence of other auxiliary circumstances, for want of which the tree cannot evolve. But what auxiliary circumstances can exist by the side of the Absolute when the world is totally dissolved? (VIb, 54, 20;



IV, 2, 3; VIb, 54, 21.)<sup>1</sup> "The analogy of the seed", Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan similarly writes, "manifesting itself in the form of the tree is inapplicable, since organic growth and development are temporal processes. To apply temporal categories to the eternal is to reduce it to the level of an empirical object or phenomenon." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 567.)

The Absolute as such ever continues to be the same unchanging Unitary Experience. It does not suffer modifications in Itself. It is not actually transformed into anything of the world. Yet within It are experienced worlds by the individuals which are hypostatized centres of conscurring activity, both of which are mutually determining appearances, unreal from the Absolute point of view. The idealism of Vasiṣṭha saves

इदं बीजेऽङ्कुर इव दृश्यमास्ते महाशये ।  
 ब्रूते य एवमब्रूत्वमेतत्तस्यास्ति शैशवम् ॥  
 मनःषष्ठेन्द्रियातीतं यत्स्यादतितरामण्यु ।  
 बीजं तद्वितुं शक्तं स्वयंभूर्जगतां कथम् ॥  
 गगनाद्वापि स्वच्छे शून्ये तत्र परे पदे ।  
 कथं सन्ति जगन्मेरुसमुद्रगगनादयः ॥  
 साकारवटधानादावङ्कुराः सन्ति युक्तिमत् ।  
 नाकारे तन्महाकारं जगदस्तीत्युक्तिकम् ॥  
 बीजं जहद्वीजवपुः फलीभूतं विलोक्यते ।  
 ब्रह्माजहन्निजवपुः फलं बीजे च संस्थितम् ॥  
 यत्रास्ति बीजं तत्र स्याच्छाखा विततरूपिणी ।  
 जन्यते कारणैः सा च वितता सहकारिभिः ॥  
 सहकारिकारणानामभावे त्वङ्कुरोद्गतिः ।  
 बन्ध्याकन्येव दृष्टेह न कदाचन केनचित् ॥  
 समस्तभूतप्रलये बीजमाकारि किं भवेत् ।  
 सहकार्यं किं तस्य जायते यद्वशाज्जगत् ॥

him from the ridiculous position of the empirical denial of the world-experience, in spite of his accosmism (*ajāti-vāda*) from the Absolute standpoint. The demands of logic and empirical experience are thought by him to be reconciled in the concept of *vivarta*, i.e., appearance without any real modification in the substance, suggested by the phenomena of dream, imagination and illusions. "The phenomenon which has no cause (actual transformation of substance), cannot be real. If it is seen to be, it is an illusion. (VIa, 94, 54.) Its appearance is due to the illusion of the percipient like the water appearing in a desert." (VIa, 94, 56.)<sup>1</sup> So is the objective world imagined by the percipients in the Absolute. (VIb, 195, 44.)<sup>2</sup> As the forms of a dream have no objective modification and do not at all exist apart from the percipient mind, so also the appearances of the world do not involve any actual production in reality, any actual change in the Absolute. "The Absolute continues to be unmodified in Its nature as a substance, which we wrongly see changed in an illusion, but which continues to be as it is." (VIb, 54, 17.)<sup>3</sup>

The problem of the relation between the appearances and the Reality, it may be mentioned here, is a very difficult one, which philosophers have found

<sup>1</sup> कारणं यस्य कार्यस्य भूमिपाल न विद्यते ।  
विद्यते नेह तत्कार्यं तत्संविच्छिस्तु विभ्रमः ॥  
अकारणं तु यत्कार्यं सदिवाप्रेऽनुभूयते ।  
तद् द्रष्टुर्विभ्रमाद्विदि मृगतृष्णाजलोपमम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> तस्मात्स्वप्नवदाभासः संविदात्मनि संस्थितः ।  
सर्गादिनानाकृतिना परमात्मा निराकृतिः ॥

<sup>3</sup> स्वरूपमजहत्त्वेव राजतेऽर्थविवर्तवत् ॥

difficult to deal with. "How can there be such a thing as appearance", Bradley confesses, "we do not understand." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 413.) Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan also says: "The relation of the finite world to the Infinite Spirit is a mystery for human understanding." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 568.) "We know that there is the absolute reality; we know that there is the empirical world, we know that the empirical world rests on the Absolute, but the *how* of it is beyond our knowledge. The hypothesis of creation is a weak one, and it assumes that God lived alone for sometime and then suddenly it occurred to him to have company when he put forth the world. The theory of manifestation is not more satisfying, for it is difficult to know how the finite can manifest the infinite. If we say that God is transformed into the world, the question arises whether it is the whole of God that is transformed or only a part. If it is the whole, then there is no God beyond the universe and we lapse into the lower pantheism. If it is only a part, then it means that God is capable of being partitioned. We cannot keep one part of God above and another part below. . . . The history of philosophy in India as well as Europe has been one long illustration on the inability of the human mind to solve the mystery of the relation of God to the world. The greatest thinkers are those who admit the mystery and comfort themselves by the idea that the human mind is not omniscient." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Hindu View of Life*, pp. 67-68.)

It may be difficult to account for the appearances, but of one thing philosophers, and Vasiṣṭha particularly, are sure, namely, that the appearances have no reality in the Absolute. For the Absolute as such the world



as such is neither produced, nor exists. Accosmism is the ultimate and the highest Truth. "As there is no actually produced object like the earth in dreams, so also in spite of being experienced there is no objectivity in reality. (VIb, 161, 22.) Nothing is in reality produced, nothing is destroyed, and nothing is experienced (in the Absolute). (III, 13, 40.) As in gold as such there is no ringness, in spite of its appearing as a ring to us, so also in the Brahman there is no world in spite of Its appearing as the world." (III, 21, 33.)<sup>1</sup> It is further said, "The word origination or production (*jati*) itself implies non-origination. How? Hear me. To originate (*jan*) means to come into existence (*prādur-bhū*). Now existence (*bhū* or *sat*) which is the soul of the root means being." (VIb, 146, 16, 17.)<sup>2</sup> Being is the Absolute. That which *is* already cannot come into existence, and that which is not already cannot also come into existence. "The world, therefore, is not, was not and will not ever be in the Absolute. It is the subject that manifests itself in itself." (IV, 2, 8.)<sup>3</sup> It may

<sup>1</sup> यथा स्वप्नेऽवनिर्नास्ति स्वानुभूताऽपि कुत्रचित् ।

तथेयं दृश्यता नास्ति स्वानुभूताऽप्यसन्मयी ॥

न किञ्चिदपि संपन्नं न च जातं न दृश्यते ॥

हेमन्यूर्मिकारुपधरेऽप्यूर्मिकात्वं न विद्यते ।

यथा तथा जगद्रूपे जगन्नास्ति च ब्रह्मणि ॥

<sup>2</sup> जातशब्दो हि सन्मात्रपर्यायः श्रूयतां कथम् ।

प्रादुर्भावे जनिस्तूतः प्रादुर्भावस्य भूवपुः ॥

सत्तार्थ एव भूः प्रोक्तस्तस्मात्संजातमुच्यते ।

सर्गतो जात इत्युक्ते सन्सर्ग इति शब्दितम् ॥

<sup>3</sup> तस्माद्राम जगन्नासीन्न चास्ति न भविष्यति ।

चेतनाकाशमेवाशु कचतीत्यमिवात्मनि ॥

be noted, according to *Vijñāna-vāda* (Idealistic) *Buddhism* also, that "In reality there is nothing which is produced or destroyed, it is only our *constructive imagination* that builds up things as perceived with all their relations, and ourselves as perceivers." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 148.) Gauḍa-pāda is also a great exponent of Accosmism. He asserts twice in his *Kārikas* that "It is the highest Truth." (III, 48; IV, 71.) His views on *Ajāti-vāda* (Non-production-theory), as he calls the doctrine, may be collected from the *Kārikas* IV, 91-93, 98; III, 20-22, 8; IV, 3-6, 7, 9, 11, 12-30, 37-40; IV, 45, 46, 48, 53, 54, 73-75. Śaṅkara endorses this view in all his Commentaries, as Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan writes: "Śaṅkara supports Gauḍa-pāda's theory of *ajāti*, or non-evolution. The world is not evolved or produced, but seems to be so, on account of limited insight." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 567.)

Thus, according to Vasiṣṭha, there is no plurality or distinctions in the Absolute as such. But in order to speak and philosophize we have to assume them. "It is only for the purpose of teaching and practical life that a wise man assumes distinctions. (III, 100, 4.) For unless distinctions are assumed, teaching cannot be imparted to the ignorant. (III, 95, 5.) Therefore, expressions, such as, "this is the Brahman", "these are the individuals", are assumed for teaching purposes. (III, 95, 6.) It is only in the company of the ignorant that the expressions like "the individuals are produced from the Brahman", etc., are used. (III, 95, 3.) The distinctions perceived here are not ultimate, but only conventional and hold good only in the realm of appearances. They are assumed by a teacher purposely. (III, 84, 19.) There is no

*bheda* (distinction) in the Absolute (as such)." (III, 84, 24.)<sup>1</sup>

This standpoint of the Absolute Reality is very difficult to grasp. The ordinary man cannot comprehend it. He will be confused, and his conventional standard of morality and value will be upset, without the higher standard being clearly implanted in his mind. So it is dangerous to reveal such a doctrine to one who is not sufficiently ripe to understand it. Therefore Vasiṣṭha tells us that the Ultimate Truth of his philosophy should not be taught to one who is not fit for it. Fitness here does not concern caste, creed, sex, age or nationality. It consists in the purity of mind and intellectual capacity to grasp the highest standpoint. Thus says he, as the last words on his metaphysics: "This doctrine of the Absolute should not be revealed to one whose intellect is not sufficiently evolved, for there is a danger of his confusing the Ultimate point of view with the point of view of sensual enjoyments (*bhoga-dṛṣṭi*). (That is, he will cease to have distinction

<sup>1</sup> अप्रबुद्धां पक्षे तत्प्रबोधाय केवलम् ।

वाच्यवाचकसंबन्धकृतो भेदः प्रकल्प्यते ॥

काचिद्वा कलना यावन्न नीता राघव प्रथाम् ।

उपदेशोपदेशश्रीस्तावलोके न शोभते ॥

अतो भेददृशा दीनामङ्गीकृत्योपदिश्यते ।

ब्रह्मेदमेते जीवा वै वेति वाचामयं क्रमः ॥

अप्रबुद्धजनाचारो यत्र राघव दृश्यते ।

तत्र ब्रह्मण उत्पन्ना जीवा इत्युक्तयः स्थिताः ॥

उपदेशाय शास्त्रेषु जातः शब्दोऽथ वाऽर्थजः ।

प्रतियोगिव्यवच्छेदसंख्यालक्षणपक्षवान् ॥

अज्ञानामवबोधार्थं न तु भेदोऽस्ति वस्तुनि ॥



between legitimate and illegitimate enjoyments). (IV, 39, 21.) First the minds of the pupils are to be purified through self-control, sense-control, etc., then they should be taught this doctrine. (IV, 39, 23.) If the doctrine that everything is Brahman is taught to those who are not sufficiently evolved in intellect, they are put on the track of hell." (IV, 39, 24.)<sup>1</sup> This, unfortunately, has been the case in India for several centuries past. People have been uttering like parrots the *Mahā-vākyas* (great sayings of the Upaniṣads) without understanding them in the least.

<sup>1</sup> अर्धव्युत्पन्नबुद्धेस्तु नैतद्व्यक्तं हि शोभते ।  
 दृश्यानया भोगाद्दृशा भावयन्नेष नश्यति ॥  
 आदौ शमदमप्रायैर्गुणैः शिष्यं विशोधयेत् ।  
 पश्चात्सर्वमिदं ब्रह्म शुद्धस्त्वमिति बोधयेत् ॥  
 अज्ञस्यार्धप्रबुद्धस्य सर्वं ब्रह्मेति यो वदेत् ।  
 महानरकजालेषु स तेन विनियोजितः ॥



PART III

REALIZATION OF THE ABSOLUTE  
POINT-OF-VIEW





## INTRODUCTORY

IN India philosophy has never been *only* an intellectual investigation into the nature of the Ultimate Reality, a disinterested pursuit of knowledge, or a mere love of wisdom. The task of a philosopher here is not over with his finishing a metaphysical system, which may satisfy only one aspect of our being, namely, the intellect. Intellect is not the whole man, and probably not the most important aspect of man. He has other aspects, equally or probably more alive in him, which also seek satisfaction. Recent reaction of the Pragmatists and the Neo-Romantisists against Rationalism in the West betrays the tendency of man to be never satisfied with a philosophy that satisfies the intellect alone. The questions of Rāma, in answer to which Vasiṣṭha is said to have given his philosophy, are not intellectual difficulties so much, as they are enquiry into how suffering can be allayed. The author of *Saṃkhya Karikā*s begins with the statement that 'philosophical enquiry proceeds, because there is threefold pain in the world'. It is doubtful whether man would have philosophized at all, if he were absolutely happy. If the Self-satisfied Absolute of a philosophy is ever Blissful in Itself, what is that to us? It will be like an enormous treasure of wealth existing somewhere which we cannot use. We would not even talk of such a thing. We want something that *we* can enjoy; some joy in which we can

participate. "Everything is dear to us for our own sake" declares the ancient philosopher Yājñña-valkya. (*Bṛhad-aranyaka Upaniṣad*, II, 4, 5.) An important part of the task of a philosopher is, therefore, to show how his philosophy "works". How it allays human misery? How can final satisfaction be attained by man with the help of his philosophy? What is the use of his philosophy? How can his philosophy be lived by? How can the sublimest concepts of his metaphysics be made actual in life?

In this part we shall learn from Vasiṣṭha, how, in order to save ourselves from the bondage and misery of finitude, we can realize the Absolute point of view in which alone there is Peace, and abiding Happiness.



## CHAPTER I

### THE HOME OF HAPPINESS

"ALL creatures", says Vasiṣṭha, "strive for happiness". (VIa, 108, 20.)<sup>1</sup> In the words of Prof. Freud: "They seek happiness, they want to be happy and to remain so." (Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, pp. 26-27.) "To find happiness" another modern author similarly writes, "is the desire, the craving of every human creature, whether expressed in words or only vaguely felt as a something that is lacking." (Hutchison: *Hypnotism and Self-education*, p. 80.) But we seek happiness in wrong places. We think we can be happy by being prosperous. All this is chimerical belief. There cannot be any abiding happiness found in the sense-enjoyments, for, "They are pleasing only at their commencement. Their pleasure has an inevitable end." (V, 22, 30.)<sup>2</sup> In fact, all kinds of worldly pleasures have their painful aspects. All worldly pleasures and joys have within them hidden the seeds of pain and sorrow. "Every sweet hath its sour" as Emerson says in his Essay on *Compensation*. So also is the view of Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (V, 22): "The

<sup>1</sup> आनन्दयैव भूतानि यतन्ते यानि कानिचित् ॥

<sup>2</sup> आपातमात्रमधुरमावश्यकपरिक्षयम् ।

भोगोपभोगमात्रं मे किं नामेदं सुखावहम् ॥

delights that are contact-born are verily wombs of pain . . .” So Vasiṣṭha says: “All pleasures terminate in pain, as all bright flames terminate in the darkness of smoke. (V, 49, 6-7.) On the head of all beings dances non-being; within all beauty is hid ugliness; and all pleasures terminate in pain. To which shall we then resort? (V, 9, 41.) We are disgusted, because we have realized that all beautiful things turn ugly; all stability is unstable; and all our truths are false. (VIb, 93, 91.) The objects of pleasure have poisonous effects; sex-pleasures make us dull; all agreeable feelings turn disagreeable. Who is not undone, if he rolls in such things? (VIb, 93, 39.) All prosperity brings added misery; all pleasures their consequent pains; life is only for death. (VIb, 93, 73.) Sensual pleasures are like the hoods of poisonous serpents, for they bitterly sting us the moment they are indulged in. (VIb, 93, 75.) The prosperity and pleasures of the world are like the shade of the raised hood of a poisonous cobra. A wise man can never take shelter in that. (VIb, 93, 78.) The enjoyments of youth are like the shade of an unstable cloud; the objects of senses are only apparently pleasant, but leave a painful effect unto the end of life. (VIb, 93, 84.) The world is said to be the source of misery. How can one expect happiness here”? (V, 9, 52.)<sup>1</sup> Prof. Freud also thinks that

<sup>1</sup> सर्वस्या एव पर्यन्ते सुखाशयाश्च संस्थितम् ॥  
 मालिन्यं दुःखमप्येवं ज्वालाया इव कज्जलम् ॥  
 सतोऽसत्ता स्थिता मूर्ध्नि मूर्ध्नि रम्येष्वरम्यता ।  
 सुखेषु मूर्ध्नि दुःखानि किमेकं संश्रयाम्यहम् ॥  
 रम्येष्वरम्यता दृष्टा स्थिरेष्वस्थिरताऽपि च ।  
 सत्येष्वसत्यताऽर्थेषु तेनेह विरसा वयम् ॥

happiness is not experienced in our life: "As we see, it is simply the pleasure-principle which draws up the programme of life's purpose. . . . Yet its programme is in conflict with the whole world, with the macrocosm as much as with the microcosm. The whole constitution of things runs counter to it; one might say that the intention that man should be 'happy' is not included in the scheme of 'creation'." (Freud: *Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 27.) "The goal towards which the pleasure-principle impels us—of becoming happy—is not attainable. . . . There are many paths by which the happiness attainable for man can be reached, but none which is certain to take him to it." (*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.) "What is called happiness in its narrowest sense comes from the satisfaction—most often instantaneous—of pent up needs which have reached great intensity, and by its very nature can only be a transitory experience. When any condition desired by the pleasure-principle is protracted, it results in a feeling of mild comfort; we are so constituted that

विषया विषवैषम्या वामाः कामविमोहदाः ।  
 रसाः सरसवैरस्या लुठनेषु न को हतः ॥  
 आपदः संपदः सर्वाः सुखं दुःखाय केवलम् ।  
 जीवितं मरणायैव वत मायाविजृम्भितम् ॥  
 भोगा विषयसंभोगा भोगा एव फणावताम् ।  
 दशन्त्येव मनाक्स्पृष्टाः दृष्टा नष्टाः प्रतिक्षणम् ॥  
 संपदः प्रमदाश्चैव तरङ्गोत्सङ्गभङ्गुराः ।  
 कस्तास्वहिफणाच्छत्रच्छायासु रमते बुधः ॥  
 शरदम्बुधरच्छायागतवयौ यौवनश्रियः ।  
 आपातरम्या विषयाः पर्यन्तपरितापिनः ॥  
 संसार एव दुःखानां सीमान्त इति कथ्यते ।  
 तन्मध्ये पतिते देहे सुखमासाद्यते कथम् ॥



we can only intensely enjoy contrasts, much less intensely states in themselves. Our possibilities of happiness are thus limited from the very start by our very constitution." (*Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.) The sum-total of all pains and pleasures of the world is probably no positive addition to the Self; it is a blank zero. When you think that you are actually gaining in the world, you will probably find that you have gained nothing. "The entire activity of life will be revealed to be *asāra* (without any substantial essence) on reflection." (VIa, 78, 8.)<sup>1</sup> No increase in our wealth, possessions, and enjoyments ever increases the chances of our thirst for happiness being satisfied. Even a flood in the mirage-river will not quench the thirst of a thirsty man. No dreamt wealth will ever allay the poverty of a poor man. "There is really no occasion to rejoice at the increase of one's wealth, possessions and enjoyments. The thirsty man can find no joy at the increase of water in a mirage-river. (IV, 46, 3.) What consolation can there be to one in a wider spread of a delusive scene?" (IV, 46, 4)<sup>2</sup> Emerson seems to think like Vasiṣṭha in his Essay on *Compensation*. Here are some of his statements that are almost identical with those of Vasiṣṭha: "For everything you gain, you lose some thing. . . . There is always some levelling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate

<sup>1</sup> रम्भागर्म इवासारो व्यवहारो विचारगः ॥

<sup>2</sup> रम्ये धनेऽथ दारादौ हर्षस्यावसरो हि कः ।  
 वृद्धायां मृगतृण्यायां किमानन्दो जलार्थिनाम् ॥  
 धनदारेषु वृद्धेषु दुःखं युक्तं न तुष्टयः ।  
 वृद्धायां मोहमाययां कः समाश्वासवानिह ॥

substantially on the same ground with all others. . . . True life and satisfaction of man seem to elude the utmost rigours or felicities of condition, and to establish themselves with great indifference under all varieties of circumstance. . . . Punishment is the fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure that concealed it. . . . Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power and fame. They think that to be great is to possess one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side,—the bitter. . . . We can no more have things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or light without a shadow. . . . He (man) sees the mermaid's head, but not the dragon's tail. . . . Thus do all things preach the indifference of circumstances. . . . Everything has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content." Compare with the view of Vasiṣṭha what Hutchison says: "Life seems but ill-adapted for happiness to be found in worldly success, in the enjoyments of pleasure or even in the joys of home life, *if* we, as it were, stake our all finding it and holding it there." (Hutchison: *Hypnotism and Self-education*, p. 80.)

Examining the psychology of pleasure and pain, Vasiṣṭha tells us that things as such are neither pleasant nor painful, agreeable nor disagreeable. It is our attitude towards them that makes them so. The same object may be pleasant, painful or indifferent to different persons, and to the same person at different times. If we hanker for some object, contact with it is pleasant, and the pleasure decreases in proportion as our hankering for it diminishes in intensity. The contact with an object which is not desired by us is felt indifferently, whereas it will be felt positively painful, if we have an

aversion for it. From this fact Vasiṣṭha concludes that pleasure or pain depends on *desire* and not on the object itself. "Who has not experienced that an object is not so pleasant later on, as it is at the time of obtaining it or at the commencement of enjoying it? (VIa, 44, 2.) The object is not so pleasant at other times, as it is at the time when we are desiring it. (VIa, 44, 3.) The enjoyment of that thing alone is pleasant, for which there is desire in the heart. And the self-same thing (which gave us pleasure when there was desire for it) becomes painful when the desire for it is over. (VIa, 120, 18.) The presence or absence with us of the object for which we have little or no desire is neither pleasant nor painful at all. (VIa, 120, 19-20.) Pleasure, therefore, depends upon desire." (VIa, 44, 4.)<sup>1</sup> It may be of some interest to compare here Vasiṣṭha's theory of pleasure and pain depending on desire with the opinion of some modern psychologists. Stout, for example, thinks like Vasiṣṭha to some extent: "All pains consist in being somehow *tantalized*,—in having a mental tendency at once stimulated and obstructed. . . . It (Pleasure) is the smooth and prosperous progress towards

<sup>1</sup> यथा प्राप्तिक्षणे वस्तु प्रथमे तुष्टये तथा ।

न प्राप्त्येकक्षणादूर्ध्वमिति को नानुभूतवान् ॥

वाञ्छाकाले यथा वस्तु तुष्टये नान्यदा तथा ॥

वद्ववासनमर्थो यः सेव्यते सुखयत्यसौ ।

यत्सुखाय तदेवाशु वस्तु दुःखाय नाशतः ॥

अविनाभावनिष्ठत्वं प्रसिद्धं सुखदुःखयोः ।

तनुवासनमर्थो यः सेव्यते वा विवासनम् ॥

नासौ सुखायते नासौ नाशकाले न दुःखदः ॥

वाञ्छाकाले तुष्टये यत्तत्र वाञ्छैव कारणम् ॥



attainment. With ultimate attainment, the mental tendency ceases to operate, and the pleasure ceases also." (Stout: *Analytic Psychology*, Book II, 1918, pp. 270-271.) William James similarly thinks: "An impulse which discharges itself immediately is generally quite *neutral* as regards pleasure or pain. . . . If such an impulse is arrested by an extrinsic force, a great feeling of *uneasiness* is produced. . . . And in proportion as the arresting force is then overcome *relief* occurs. The relief is pleasure and uneasiness is a pain." That it is not the object as such but the impulse (desire) towards the object that related to pleasure or pain appears from the following statement of James: "The moth is probably as annoyed, if hindered from getting into the lamp-flame, as the *roué*, if interrupted in his debauch, and we are chagrined, if prevented from doing *some* quite an unimportant act which would have given us no noticeable pleasure, if done merely because the prevention itself is disagreeable." (James: *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, pp. 555-556.)

The above analysis reveals that really speaking the rise of a desire (in the widest sense) in us for something is itself a painful experience, and our obtaining the object is pleasant, because it relieves us from desire, *i.e.*, removes the cause of pain, the desire. So the enjoyment of the objects of our desires is only negatively pleasant. So in reality the presence and absence of desire are our pain and pleasure. "The pain consequent on the rise of desires and the pleasure consequent on the subsiding of desire cannot be equalled by the pains of hell and the pleasures of heaven. (VIb, 36, 24.) But the pleasure that is momentary and conditional is no pleasure (really). It is pain."

(VIb, 68, 31.)<sup>1</sup> Even a sensualist like Casanova realized that "Desires are but pain and torment and enjoyment is sweet because it delivers us from them." (Casanova : *Memoirs*, p. 690.)

But if desire is permanently and absolutely eradicated from the mind, there will not only be freedom from the clutches of pain, but also there will be the experience of a peculiar abiding joy by the individual, which is independent of external objects. "When all desires are given up by the heart, one experiences moonlike joy within. (V, 74, 24.) The pleasure (or rather happiness) of desirelessness is much greater than that of ruling over an empire, than that of the company of one's beloved person, than that of heaven, and even than that enjoyed by Viṣṇu. (V, 74, 44.) How can anybody equal him (in happiness) who is self-controlled and whose mind is never coloured by the ideas: "may this be mine" and "this should not come to me"? (V, 74, 50.)"

This joy is really the Joy or Bliss inherent in the Absolute which is our very Self. The Absolute is the real home of happiness. It is that Bliss Itself

<sup>1</sup> इच्छोदयो यथा दुःखमिच्छाशान्तिर्यथा सुखम् ।

तथा न नरके नापि ब्रह्मलोकेऽनुभूयते ॥

यत्सुखं दुःखमेवाहुः क्षणनाशानुभूतिभिः ।

अकृत्रिममनाद्यन्तं यत्सुखं तत्सुखं विदुः ॥

<sup>2</sup> आशापरिकरे राम नूनं परिहृते हृदा ।

पुमानागतसौन्दर्यो ह्लादमायाति चन्द्रवत् ॥

अपि राज्यादपि स्वर्गादपीन्दोरपि माधवात् ।

अपि कान्तासमासङ्गनैराशयं परमं सुखम् ॥

इदमेवास्ति चरमं माऽस्तु ममेति हृदि रजना ।

न यस्यास्ति तमात्मेऽंशं तोलयन्ति कथं जनाः ॥

which all of us are unconsciously or consciously seeking. "That is Ultimate goal, the Summum Bonum, the Ultimate Stay, the Eternal Good." (V, 54, 70.) "Having experienced that state of Highest Joy, the embodied ones would not attach any value to the objective world, as kings do not to poverty. (V, 54, 72.) As a man who has seen heaven will not be interested in the earth, so also one who has tasted the Bliss of the Self, for years or even for a moment, will not find any taste in the objects of enjoyment." (V, 54, 69.)<sup>1</sup> Similarly we find in the *Bhagavad-gita*: "He, whose self is unattached to external contacts and findeth joy in the Self, having the self united with the Eternal, enjoys imperishable Bliss." (V, 21.)

A glimpse of this joy can be had when the mind is at peace; when it is not functioning in its usual way of thinking of this or that object, but is calm and quiet. "The pleasure which is experienced when the mind is at peace is inexpressible in words. (VIa, 44, 27.) The peculiar joy which is felt when the mind is not functioning cannot be felt otherwise, even in heaven." (VIa, 44, 26.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> तत्पदं सा गतिः शान्ता तच्छ्रेयः शाश्वतं शिवम् ।

तत्र विश्रान्तिमाप्तस्य भूयो नो बाधते भ्रमः ॥

तां महानन्दपदवीं चित्तादासाय देहिनः ।

इदं न बहु मन्यन्ते राजानो दीनतामिव ॥

क्षणं वर्षसहस्रं वा तत्र लब्ध्वा स्थिति मनः ।

रतिमेति न भोगौघे दृष्टस्वर्ग इवावनौ ॥

<sup>2</sup> चित्तोपशमजं स्फारमवाच्यं वचसा सुखम् ।

क्षयातिशयनिर्मुक्तं नोदेति न च शाम्यति ॥

यत्र नाभ्युदितं चित्तं तत्तत्सुखमकृत्रिमम् ।

न स्वर्गादौ संभवति मरौ हिमगृहं यथा ॥



## CHAPTER II

### BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

IN spite of, thus, ever living in the ocean of Bliss, we are at the mercy of external objects for happiness. In spite of our Self being the fountain-head of Joy, we are seeking it in the objective world. This is our trouble. This is what is called bondage by Vasiṣṭha. "Intense desire for objects is said to be bondage. (II, 2, 5.) He experiences bondage who experiences pleasure or pain. (VIb, 125, 34.) Craving for objects which one wants to have, and aversion from the objects which one does not want to have, is bondage; nothing else. (V, 13, 20.) The attachment of the subject to the object is called bondage." (III, 1, 22.)<sup>1</sup>

This, however, is only one aspect of our bondage. Our bondage manifests in different forms in our intellectual, emotional and volitional aspects. When we are bound, we are bound in all the aspects of our being. Ignorance on the intellectual side, experience of pleasure and pain on the emotional side, and limited

<sup>1</sup> पदार्थवासनादार्थं बन्ध इत्यभिधीयते ॥

सुखदुःखैर्युतो योऽसौ स्वयं बन्धानुभूतिमान् ॥

उपादेयानुपतनं हेयैकान्तविवर्जनम् ।

यदेतन्मनसो राम तद्वन्धं विद्धि नेतरत् ॥

द्रष्टृदृश्यस्य सत्ताऽङ्गं बन्ध इत्यभिधीयते ।

interests and purposes on the volitional side, are one and the same fact of our being an individual, finite and limited something, forgetting that we are the Infinite Absolute Itself. Whether we can or cannot answer the question how the Infinite could appear as limited and finite, is immaterial. We must face the fact as it is, in spite of our incapacity to explain how or why it is so." "How could it arise"? should not be your concern. (IV, 41, 32.) "How shall I get rid of it"? this should be your present consideration. (For), when it is no longer experienced, and has totally vanished, then will you know whence it originates, how it originated, and how it is destroyed." (IV, 41, 33-34.)<sup>1</sup> We are finite in the Infinite. Let us here analyse the various aspects of our finitude or bondage. Vasiṣṭha points out several aspects or causes of our bondage. Here are some of them :

(1) *Desire* : "They become bound in the world who are bound by the cords of desires and hopes. (IV, 27, 18.) The mind does not know, on account of its ignorance, that its desires are the threads which are spinning a cocoon to bind it." (VIa, 10, 8.)<sup>2</sup>

(2) *Self-limitation* : "One who believes himself to be limited to any extent, becomes a poor wretch, even

<sup>1</sup> कुतो जातेयमिति ते राम माऽस्तु विचारणा ॥  
 इमां कथमहं हन्मीत्येषा तेऽस्तु विचारणा ।  
 अस्तं गतायां क्षीणायामस्यां ज्ञास्यसि राघव ॥  
 यत एषा यथा चैषा यथा नष्टेऽखण्डितम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> वासनातन्तुबद्धा य आशापाशवशीकृताः ।  
 वश्यतां यान्ति ते लोके रज्जुबद्धाः स्वगा इव ॥  
 कोशकारवदात्मानं वासनातन्तुतन्तुभिः ।  
 वेष्टयन्नेव चेतोऽन्तर्बालत्वान्नावबुध्यते ॥

though he were an omniscient being. (IV, 27, 22.) He who imagines *iyatta* (limitation) in the Infinite Self, becomes limited and gets bound. (IV, 27, 23.) To have limited interests and purposes is the source of all troubles." (IV, 27, 25.)<sup>1</sup>

(3) *Wrong belief that we are not the Infinite*: "We are miserable on account of the wrong belief that we are not Brahman. (IV, 12, 2.) In spite of living in the ocean of the Absolute, and in reality being identical with it, we imagine ourselves to be different from It. This is why we undergo the delusion of the worldly career." (IV, 12, 3.)<sup>2</sup>

(4) *Self-forgetfulness*: "One gets bound on account of his idea that he is not Brahman. (III, 114, 23.) There seems to be no other reason why people should undergo the experience of other lives than Self-forgetfulness." (III, 95, 14.)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> इयन्मात्रपरिच्छिन्नो येनात्मा भव्यमावितः ।  
स सर्वज्ञोऽपि सर्वत्र परां कृपणतां गतः ॥  
अनन्तस्याप्रेमस्य येनेयता प्रकल्पिता ।  
आत्मनस्तस्य तेनात्मा स्वात्मनैवावशीकृतः ॥  
आस्थामात्रमनन्तानां दुःखानामाकरं विदुः ।  
अनास्थामात्रमभितः सुखानामाकरं विदुः ॥

<sup>2</sup> मिथ्यामावनया ब्रह्मन्स्वविकल्पकलङ्किताः ।  
न ब्रह्म वयमित्यन्तर्निश्चयेन ह्यधोगताः ॥  
ब्रह्मणो व्यतिरिक्तत्वं ब्रह्मार्णवगता अपि ।  
भावयन्त्यो विमुह्यन्ति भीमासु भवभूमिषु ॥

<sup>3</sup> नाहं ब्रह्मेति संकल्पात्सुदृढाद्व्यते मनः ॥  
हेतुर्विहरणे तेषामात्मविस्मरणाद्वते ।  
न कश्चिद्व्यते साधो जन्मान्तरफलप्रदः ॥



(5) *The idea of Ego*: "To imagine 'I am' (this or that) is for unending bondage. And 'I am not' is for liberation." (VIa, 99, 11.)<sup>1</sup>

(6) *Ignorance of the true nature of the Self*: "One wanders in the illusion of the world on account of his ignorance of the Self." (VIa, 10, 4.)<sup>2</sup>

Aśva-ghoṣa, the famous *Mahā-yāna* Buddhist thinker, it is interesting to note here, thinks of the causes of bondage or non-enlightenment similarly: "The manifestations of non-enlightenment are made in three ways: (1) as disturbance of the mind (*ālaya-vijñāna*) by *avidyā-karma* (ignorant action), producing misery (*duḥkha*); (2) by appearance of an ego or a perceiver; and (3) by the creation of an external world which does not exist itself independent of the perceiver." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 132-133.) Aśva-ghoṣa further thinks: "When the oneness of the totality of things (*dharma-dhātu*) is not recognized, then ignorance as well as particularization arises, and all phases of the defiled mind are thus developed." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 79.) It is very much similar to what Vasiṣṭha holds.

Liberation, on the other hand, is the state of experience when one is free from bondage in all its aspects. It is the realization of one's identity with the Absolute, Infinite Self, and thus getting absolved of all limitations and sufferings. "The dissolution of the mind (individuality) through detachment from all desires is called *mokṣa* (liberation) by the philosophers who have seen the Self. (V, 73, 36.) Having come to know the world to be an illusion, if one becomes indifferent to the objects of

<sup>1</sup> अहमित्येवं संकल्पो बन्वायातिविनाशिने ।

नाहमित्येवं संकल्पो मोक्षाय विमलात्मने ॥

<sup>2</sup> अपरिज्ञात आत्मैव भ्रमतां समुपामतः ।

enjoyment, and stays without desires, this state is called *Nirvāṇa*. It is the extinction of the mind like the extinction of the flame of a lamp. (VIb, 38, 32.) Mind is said to be dead when it is free from fluctuations (*cañcalata*). The experience in which the mind is no more is called *mokṣa* (liberation). (III, 112, 8.) Mind is the Self with *saṃkalpa* (desire, imagination); *mokṣa* is freedom from mind through freedom from *saṃkalpa*. (V, 13, 80.) Liberation is that state of existence when there is no taste for the objective world, when it no longer interests us, and therefore, no desire for it arises in us. (VIb, 37, 33.) When the world drops down wholly from our consciousness, we are liberated. There is then nothing which is desired or undesired by us. (III, 21, 11.) Liberation is the cutting off of the knot of ignorance which consists in identifying the Self with the unreal and illusory objective things." (VIb, 20, 17.)<sup>1</sup> Thus,

सकलाशास्वसंसक्त्या यत्स्वयं चेतसः क्षयः ।  
 स मोक्षनाम्ना कथितस्तत्त्वज्ञैरात्मदर्शिभिः ॥  
 दीपनिर्वाणनिर्वाणमस्तंगतमनोगतिम् ।  
 आत्मन्येव शमं यातं सन्तमेवामलं विदुः ॥  
 यत्तु चञ्चलताहीनं तन्मनो मृतमुच्यते ।  
 तदेव च तपःशास्त्रसिद्धान्तो मोक्ष उच्यते ॥  
 परस्य पुंसः संकल्पमयत्वं चित्तमुच्यते ।  
 अचित्तत्वमसंकल्पान्मोक्षस्तेनाभिजायते ॥  
 दृश्यं विरसतां यातं यदा न स्वदते क्वचित् ।  
 तदा नेच्छा प्रसरति तदैव च विमुक्तता ॥  
 अत्यन्तविस्मृतं विश्वं मोक्ष इत्यभिधीयते ।  
 ईप्सितानीप्सिते तत्र न स्तः केचन कस्यचित् ॥  
 अज्ञानस्य महामन्येर्मिथ्यावेद्यात्मनोऽसतः ।  
 अहमित्ययंरूपस्य भेदो मोक्ष इति स्मृतः ॥

Liberation (*mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa*), according to Vasiṣṭha is the realization of one's identity with the Infinite Absolute Brahman through dehypnotization of ourselves from the self-imposed limitation and finitude into which we have hypnotized ourselves, and have been continuing in the hypnotic state through our wrong suggestions, affirmations and behaviour. "It is", as Deussen puts it, "the awakening of the consciousness that our own Self is identical with Brahman." (Deussen: *System of Vedānta*, p. 401.)

It is interesting to note that quite a number of modern thinkers agree with Vasiṣṭha in holding that ignorance of the Real nature of the Self, limiting our view to only some aspects of the whole of our being, asserting the claims of the ego, etc., are the causes of all our misery and suffering and their absence those of joy and happiness. Here are some of the statements:

"It (evil) is the outcome of the finitude of a being that is in its deepest nature infinite. The root of evil lies in the finite-infinite nature of man. It consists in the individual seeking his good in narrow and circumscribed ends incompatible with his universal nature. Whatever arrests the movement of the infinite spirit towards infinitude is evil." (Halder: *Neo-Hegelianism*, Prof. Watson's view, p. 237.) "The true life of the individual is the life in the whole." (Halder: *Neo-Hegelianism*, p. 326.) "A too powerful ego is a prison from which man must escape if he is to enjoy the world to the full." (Russell: *The Conquest of Happiness*, p. 183.) "It is in such profound instinctive union with the stream of life that the greatest joy is to be found." (*Ibid.*, p. 249.) "The man who can centre his thoughts and hopes upon something transcending self can find a certain peace in the ordinary troubles of life



which is impossible to the pure egoist." (*Ibid.*, p. 74.) "To find the right road out of the despair, civilized man must enlarge his heart as he has enlarged his mind. He must learn to transcend self, and in so doing to acquire the freedom of the universe." (*Ibid.*, p. 95.) "So long as we feel ourselves to have individualities of our own, we will be beset with conflicts and contradiction, pain and pleasure, but when once we disinterestedly give ourselves up to the Whole, there is an end to all discord." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 437.) "We can never completely break the shell of egoism and attain the infinite if we remain in the finite universe, giving a substantial existence to our own individual self. The release from this world of trouble, risk and adventure can be had only by losing the separate self." (*Ibid.*, p. 449.) "Sin is putting trust in things that perish. . . . Evil is the separation of the soul from the source of life." (*Ibid.*, p. 450.) "Seeking to save his personal life, man forfeits the greater impersonal life of truth; clinging to the perishable, he is shut out from the knowledge of the Eternal. . . . Love of self shuts men out from Truth, and seeking their own personal happiness they lose the deeper, purer and more abiding bliss. . . . He who has yielded up that self, that personality that most men love, and to which they cling with such fierce tenacity, has left behind him all perplexity, and has entered into a simplicity so profoundly simple as to be looked upon by the world, involved as it is in a network of error, as foolishness," (James Allen: *Book of Meditations*, pp. 216-217.) "The spirit of man is inseparable from the Infinite, and can be satisfied with nothing short of the Infinite, and the burden of pain will continue to weigh upon man's heart, and the

shadows of sorrow to darken his pathway until ceasing from wanderings in the dream-world of matter, he comes back to his home in the reality of the Eternal. As the smallest drop of water detached from the ocean contains all the qualities of the ocean, so man, detached in consciousness from the Infinite, contains within himself its likeness; and as the drop of water must, by the law of nature, ultimately find its way back to the ocean and lose itself in its silent depths, so must man, by the unfailing law of his nature, at last return to his source, and lose himself in the heart of the Infinite." (*Ibid.*, p. 165.) "To become one with the Infinite is the goal of man." (*Ibid.*, p. 165.) "Whilst vainly imagining that the pleasures of earth are real and satisfying, pain and sorrow continually remind man of their unreal and unsatisfying nature. Ever striving to believe that complete satisfaction is to be found in material things, he is conscious of an inward and persistent revolt against this belief, which revolt is at once a refutation of his essential mortality, and an inherent and imperishable proof that only in the immortal, the eternal, the infinite, can he find satisfaction of unbroken peace." (*Ibid.*, p. 164.) "Just in proportion as we realize this oneness with the Divine, this at-onement with our Maker, do our lives become calm, confident, creative. . . . All our troubles come from our sense of separateness from the Infinite Source. . . . This is the secret of all healing, of all health, prosperity, and happiness, the *conscious union with the Divine*." (Marden: *The Miracle of Right Thought*, pp. 117-121.) "In just the degree that we come into a conscious realization of our oneness with the Infinite Life, and open ourselves to this divine inflow, do we actualize in ourselves the qualities and powers of the



Infinite Life. . . . In the degree that we recognize our oneness, our connection with the Infinite Spirit which is the life of all, and in the degree that we open ourselves to this divine inflow, do we come into harmony with the highest, the most powerful, and the most beautiful everywhere. . . . And in the degree that we fail to recognize our oneness with this Infinite Source, and so close, shut ourselves to this divine inflow, do we come into that state where there seems to be with us nothing of beauty, nothing of power." (Trine: *In Tune with the Infinite*, pp. 8, 14-15.)

Before going into the details of the process of dehypnotization of ourselves from the bondage to finitude and limitation, we may here point out in brief, and in general, the way in which we can effect our liberation. The process is mainly of affirmation and auto-suggestion, on the one hand, and negation of limiting interests, desires and beliefs on the other. "One becomes the omnipresent Lord, when one acquires the nature of Brahman and gives up the character of the mind. (VIa, 128, 45-46.) When one meditates on the Self which is beyond the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, and that which is even beyond the individual (jīva), and affirms 'I am That' (*So'ham*), one gets liberated. (VIa, 128, 46-47.) When one affirms and realizes that the Self is present equally in all beings and all beings are present within the Self, he is liberated. (VIa, 128, 47, 49.) When one frees himself from the idea of being the actor and enjoyer, from all limitations, from pleasure and pain, one is liberated. (VIa, 128, 47-48.) One is liberated when one fixes himself in the Joy of the fourth state of experience, neglecting (transcending) the other three—the waking, dream and sleep. (VIa, 128, 49-50.) One becomes



liberated the very moment one can stay desireless giving up everything." (III, 66, 19.)<sup>1</sup>

The experience of Liberation is nothing mysterious. It is only coming to the consciousness of a fact that is always true. We have already seen that everything is ever one with the Infinite Absolute. Every one of us is identical with the Absolute. We live, move and have our being in the Ocean of Brahman. "What that Subtle Being is", as the *Chândogya Upaniṣad* (VI, 14, 3,) stated long ago, "of which the whole Universe is composed, That is the Real, That is the Soul, That art Thou"; or as a modern writer also says: "The Supreme FACT of our life and Consciousness is, that in any final analysis the *individual life* and *ONE LIFE* are one and identical." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 431.) But we are too busy with limited interests and purposes to *recognize* this Fact, to *feel* it, and to *live* it. Coming to consciousness of this fact, feeling this fact, and living it is liberation. To realize this, it is not necessary that one

१ यदा ब्रह्मगुणैर्जीवो युक्तस्त्यक्त्वा मनोगुणान् ॥  
 संशान्तकरणप्राप्तस्तदा स्यात्सर्वगः प्रभुः ॥  
 देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धेः परस्तस्माच्च यः परः ।  
 सोऽहमस्मि यदा ध्यायेत्तदा जीवो विमुच्यते ॥  
 सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ॥  
 यदा पश्यत्यभेदेन तदा जीवो विमुच्यते ॥  
 कर्तृभोक्त्रादिनिर्मुक्तः सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितः ॥  
 सुखदुःखविनिर्मुक्तस्तदानीं विप्रमुच्यते ॥  
 ज्ञाप्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्ताख्यं हित्वा स्थानत्रयं यदा ।  
 विशेत्तुरीयमानन्दं तदा जीवो विमुच्यते ॥  
 यदि सर्वं परित्यज्य तिष्ठत्युत्क्रान्तवासनः ।  
 अमुनैव निमेषेण तन्मुक्तोऽसि न संशयः ॥

should give up this body. Identity with the Absolute Reality can be realized even now when one is living in this body. We can feel and live in the identity with the Absolute anywhere and at any time, for really we are nowhere and at no time separate from It. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, admits *jīvan-mukti*, liberation while one is living, or *sadeha-mukti*, liberation felt even while one is embodied. But, as we have already seen, the present state of our existence (the body, the environment and the objective world experienced by us) is only the result and product of our previous thought, and we continue to have or change it in accordance with our thought. It is therefore quite evident that if on account of our realization of our identity with the Absolute Whole, we cease to indulge in further weaving a web of individuality, of limitation and objective world for us, through our *Samkalpa* and desire, there will come surely a time when the experience of these things will totally drop from our consciousness, and free from all distinctions and differentiations, free from limited or embodied existence, and free from the vision of an unreal and illusory objective world, we shall be reinstated in the Absolute Experience, which the metaphysics of Vasiṣṭha has taught us to be the Ultimate and Ever-present Reality. He therefore postulates the possibility of *Nirvāṇa*, *Videha-mukti*, or total extinction of individuality with the objective world-experience. He says: "There are two kinds of Liberation, *sadeha*, with a body, and *videha*, without any body." (V, 42, 11.)<sup>1</sup> We shall learn more, in a future chapter, about the character of those who are in the former state. Here we may only

<sup>1</sup> द्विविधा मुक्तता लोके संभवत्यनवाकृते ।

सदेहेका विदेहाऽन्या विभागोऽयं तयोः शृणु ॥

point out that the living or embodied liberated person is one who is fully conscious of his identity with the Absolute, and lives a life free from limited interests and desires, and no more wills to be finite. His emotions, actions and thoughts are no longer personal. "When after the dissolution of the body, there is no further birth in any form, and no further experience of objectivity, liberation is called disembodied liberation." (V, 42, 13.)<sup>1</sup> There is little difference, according to Vasiṣṭha, between the two kinds of liberation, for when one is installed in the Absolute Experience, he never forgets his identity with the Absolute, in spite of his being embodied. "There is not much difference between the *sadeha* and the *videha* liberated ones. Both are liberated. Air is air whether it is at rest or in motion." (II, 4, 5.)<sup>2</sup>

The idea of *Nirvāṇa* according to Aśva-ghoṣa, it may also be mentioned here, is not much different from that of Vasiṣṭha. Dr. Dāsa-gupta rightly says, "The *Nirvāṇa* of the *Tathata* philosophy is not nothingness, but *Tathata* in its purity, unassociated with any kind of disturbance which produces all the diversities of experience." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 136.) Suzuki has also described *Nirvāṇa* in such terms that there is not much difference between the *Nirvāṇa* of the *Maha-yāna Buddhism* and that of the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha*. He says: "To use psychological terms, it is a state of transcendental or transmarginal consciousness, where all sense-perceptions and conceptual images vanish, and where

<sup>1</sup> सैव देहक्षये राम पुनर्जननवर्जिता ।

विदेहमुक्ता प्रोक्ता तत्स्था नापान्ति दृश्यताम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> न मनागपि भेदोऽस्ति सदेहादेहमुक्तयोः ।

सस्पन्दोऽप्यथ वाऽस्पन्दो वायुरेव यथाऽनिलः ॥



we are in a state of absolute unconsciousness (in the ordinary sense of the term). . . . Here is a region where the consciousness of subject and object is completely annihilated, but here we do not have the silence and darkness of a grave, nor is it a state of absolute nothingness. The self is here lost in the presence of something indescribable, or better, it expands so as to embrace the world-all within itself, and is not conscious of any egoistic elation or arrogance; but it merely feels the fulness of reality and a touch of celestial joy that cannot be imparted to others by anything human." (Suzuki: *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 119.) Compare with the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* also the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* on the final deliverance of individuality:

"As rivers run, and in the deep,  
Lose name and form, are lost to sight,  
The Sage released from name and form,  
Enters the highest spirit of light." (*M. U.*, III, 2, 8.)

Saṁkara also agrees with the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in holding that there is no experience of the objective world for the *videha* (disembodied) liberated one. "There are countless passages in Saṁkara" says Rādhā-kṛṣṇan, "which declare that, as the misconception of the snake disappears on the perception of the rope, as the dream creations vanish on awakening, so also *samsāra* ceases to exist on attaining *mukti*." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 638.)

The liberated state, Vasiṣṭha points out, should not be confused with a state of inertness or unconsciousness observed in inert things like stone. Liberation or *Nirvāṇa* is the state of perfected Consciousness in which all distinctions have been transcended, whereas the inertness of stone, etc., is the state of consciousness at its lowest level where distinctions and differentiations have yet to

be experienced, as they are potentially present within it. There is a tendency towards actualization and evolution of a world-experience inherent in the undeveloped consciousness of stones and trees, in the form of latent desire or unconscious will, which Schopenhauer has emphasized in his philosophy. Inertness is, therefore, not liberation for, in the latter there is no will to evolve into higher forms of consciousness and to experience a more differentiated world-experience, as it is potentially present in the former. "Desire which is a potency of consciousness is present within inert things in a sleeping condition, in a seed-form (which has still to wake up and to fructify into a differentiated experience of objectivity). (VIa, 10, 23.) The unconsciousness (sleep) in which the seed of desire is present is not the desired experience of liberation. For that, the fourth (*turiya*) kind of experience of the unconsciousness of the world, in which there is present no seed of *vāsana* (desire) to fructify in the future, is required. (VIa, 10, 20.) All the inert creatures (*sthāvaras*) have within them sleeping (potential) desires which shall be fructified in their being born over and over again." (VIa, 10, 18.) But that is not the case with the liberated ones, for, "their seed of desire is burnt" (VIa, 10, 22)<sup>1</sup> and has no more to fructify in a future world-experience.

<sup>1</sup> चिच्छक्तिर्वासनाबीजरूपिणी स्वापधर्मिणी ।  
स्थिता रसतया नित्यं स्थावरादिषु वस्तुषु ॥  
यत्रास्ति वासनाबीजं तत्सुषुप्तं न सिद्धये ।  
निर्बीजा वासना यत्र तत्तुर्यं सिद्धिदं स्मृतम् ॥  
स्थावरादय एते हि समस्ता जडधर्मिणः ।  
सुषुप्तपदमारूढा जन्मयोग्याः पुनः पुनः ॥  
निर्दग्धवासनाबीजसत्तासामान्यरूपवान् ।  
सदेहो वा विदेहो वा न भूयो दुःखमागमवेत् ॥

We must not forget that the concepts of bondage and liberation have no meaning from the Absolute point of view. The Absolute Brahman as such is never bound or free. These concepts hold good only within the realm of appearances. "The ideas of bondage and freedom are imagined by the ignorant alone. (III, 100, 39.) In Reality there is neither bondage nor freedom. (III, 100, 40.)<sup>1</sup> Our Self is eternally beyond the clutches of bondage. To think that we are bound is a wrong conception. Liberation is also a wrong idea, for he who is never bound cannot be said to be liberated. Imaginary liberation is true within the realm of appearance for him who has imagined bondage." (III, 100, 37.) Aśva-ghoṣa likewise thinks: "Non-enlightenment has no existence of its own aside from its relation with enlightenment *a priori*. But enlightenment *a priori* is spoken of only in contrast to non-enlightenment, and as non-enlightenment is a non-entity, true enlightenment in turn loses its significance too. They are distinguished only in mutual relation as enlightenment or non-enlightenment." (Dāsa-gupta: *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 1, p. 132.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> मिथ्याकाल्पनिकीवेयं मूर्खाणां बन्धकल्पना ।

मिथ्यैवाभ्युदिता तेषामितरा मोक्षकल्पना ॥

वस्तुतस्तु न बन्धोऽस्ति न मोक्षोऽस्ति महामते ॥

<sup>2</sup> नित्यासंभवबन्धस्य बन्धोऽस्मीति कुकल्पना ।

यस्य काल्पनिकस्तस्य मोक्षो मिथ्या न तत्त्वतः ॥



### CHAPTER III

## THE MEANS OF ATTAINING LIBERATION

IT has been a matter of great dispute in India whether Knowledge, Action or Devotion (*jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti*) is the proper means of attaining the state of Liberation from the bondage and sufferings of life. Diverse answers have been given by various thinkers, some preferring one to the others, some combining two or all of them. Vasiṣṭha has a clear and definite view of his own on this problem, which we propose to state in this chapter.

According to Vasiṣṭha no other course than Self-knowledge can help to attain Liberation. "Liberation cannot be attained by living in a forest, undergoing penances (VIb, 199, 30), performance or renunciation of any kind of actions, undergoing any disciplinary practices (VIb, 199, 31), pilgrimages, distribution of alms, bath in sacred rivers, learning, concentration on anything, *yoga*, sacrifices (VIb, 174, 24), fate, performance of duties, riches, friends (V, 3, 8), fasting (III, 6, 4), Scripture, words of a teacher, worship of any god (VIb, 197, 18), etc. Some of these things may take one to heaven, but not to Liberation. (VIb, 174, 26.) There is in fact no other course for crossing over the ocean of the *samsāra* for a bound man than knowledge." (V, 67, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> संसारोत्तरणे तत्र न हेतुर्बन्धासिता ।

नापि स्वदेशवासित्वं न च कष्टतपःक्रियाः ॥

Thus according to him knowledge alone is the way to Liberation. "The wise have easily crossed over the ocean of the wandering through life and death with the help of the boat of knowledge alone. (II, 11, 36.) Here knowledge alone is the thing required. (III, 6, 2.) The long standing evil of ignorance which is called the world-experience cannot be made to cease without knowledge. (III, 8, 2.) By knowledge all sufferings come to an end. The knower alone is happy; he does not merge into the world. (V, 93, 18, 24.) The knower (of Truth) alone is happy, he is strong, and he really lives. Be a knower, therefore. (V, 92, 49.) The greatest success is attained through knowledge, not through anything else; knowledge removes ignorance; knowledge removes all sufferings. (V, 88, 12.) If the Ultimate Self is known, all pains come to an end. (III, 7, 17.) The self of all beings becomes Brahman when awakened by knowledge, but wanders in delusion without knowledge." (V, 13, 68.)<sup>1</sup>

न क्रियायाः परित्यागो न क्रियायाः समाश्रयः ।

नाचारेषु समारम्भविचित्रफलपालयः ॥

न तीर्थेन न दानेन न ज्ञानेन न विद्यया ।

न ध्यानेन न योगेन न तपोभिर्न चाध्वरैः ॥

न दैवं न च कर्माणि न धनानि न बान्धवाः ॥

किञ्चिन्नोपकरोत्यत्र तपोदानव्रतादिकम् ॥

न शास्त्रान्न गुरोर्वाक्यान् दानान्नेश्वरार्चनात् ॥

तपस्तीर्थादिना स्वर्गाः प्राप्यन्ते न तु मुक्ता ॥

ज्ञानेतरा गतिर्नास्ति संसारतरणे पाशबन्धस्य चेतसः ॥

<sup>1</sup> ज्ञानयुक्तिरूपेणैव संसारान्ध्रं मुदुस्तरम् ।

महाधियः सुमुत्तीर्णा निमेषेण रघूद्वह ॥

अत्र ज्ञानमनुष्ठानं न त्वन्यदुपयुज्यते ॥

बहुकालमपि रुद्धा मिथ्याज्ञानविषूचिका ।

*Bhakti* or devotion to any god is not required, and is not of much use in attaining Liberation. This is the definite view of Vasiṣṭha. He is a staunch believer in self-reliance, self-effort and complete independence of man in determining his own fate whether it be in the world or in getting rid of the world-experience altogether. Man according to him is the sole master of his fate or destiny, as we have already seen. No body can ever confer Liberation as a boon on any body, unless the latter deserves it by his own right. No other agency than our own, according to him, can show us the Absolute, which is our very Self. One's own direct realization of the Self is what is required to experience Liberation, and not any devotion to any external god, however strong or powerful he may be. The real God according to Vasiṣṭha lives in the heart of everybody. It is He, the Self of our selves, that is to be worshipped. Any other god need not be worshipped at all. And the only way to worship the real God residing within the temple of our own body is Self-knowledge.

जगन्नाम्रथविचाराख्या विना ज्ञानं न शाम्यति ॥

ज्ञानेन सर्वदुःखानां विनाश उपजायते ॥

ज्ञानवानुदितानन्दो न क्वचित्परिमज्जति ॥

ज्ञानवानेव सुखवाञ्छानवानेव जीवति ।

ज्ञानवानेव बलवांस्तस्माञ्ज्ञानमयो भव ॥

ज्ञानान्निर्दुःखतामेति ज्ञानादज्ञानसंश्रयः ।

ज्ञानादेव परा सिद्धिर्नान्यस्माद्राम वस्तुतः ॥

ज्ञायते परमात्मा चेद्राम दुःखस्य संततिः ।

क्षयमेति विषावेदशान्ताविव विष्णुचिका ॥

कलना सर्वजन्तूनां विज्ञानेन शमेन च ।

प्रबुद्धा बन्धतामेति भ्रमतीतरथा जगत् ॥



Meditation on the nature of the Self is the only way to propitiate the real God. This in brief is his view with regard to devotion. We arrange below his own statements on the subject.

Devotion to any god is not necessary for Liberation: "One is one's own friend or enemy. If one does not save himself, there is no other remedy. (Vib, 162, 18.) What is not attained by oneself through one's own effort constantly made, *vairāgya*, and control over the senses, cannot be attained through anything else in the three worlds. (V, 43, 18.) Worship, therefore, the Self by the self, please the Self, devote yourself to the Self, and having seen the Self, have your stay in the Self. (V, 43, 19.) As the earth is the ultimate source of all grains, so the control of one's own mind is the source of all good positions and durable prosperity." (V, 43, 35.)<sup>1</sup> Similar passages we find in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Let him raise the self by the Self and not let the Self become depressed; for verily is the Self the friend of the self, and also the Self the self's enemy; the Self is the friend of the self of him in whom the self by the Self is vanquished; but to the unsubdued self the Self verily becomes hostile as an enemy." (VI, 5-6.)

१ आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।  
 आत्माऽऽत्मना न चेत्त्रास्तदुपायोऽस्ति नेतरः ॥  
 अभ्यासवैराग्ययुतादाक्रान्तेन्द्रियपन्नगात् ।  
 नात्मनः प्राप्यते यत्तत्प्राप्यते न जगत्त्रयात् ॥  
 आराधयात्मनाऽऽत्मानमात्मनाऽऽत्मानमर्चयेत् ।  
 आत्मनाऽऽत्मानमालोक्य संतिष्ठस्वात्मनाऽऽत्मनि ॥  
 सर्वेषामुत्तमस्थानां सर्वासां चिरसंपदाम् ।  
 त्वमनोनिग्रहो भूमिर्भूमिः सत्यश्रियामिव ॥

"Devotion to god Viṣṇu is invented only to put on the right track those fools (*mūrkhās*) who run away from study, effort and thinking. (V, 43, 20.) But if one prays for the favour of gods like Viṣṇu, etc., why should he not do the same thing with regard to his own mind? (V, 43, 25.) The real Viṣṇu resides within every one. Unfortunate and worst men are they who seek after the external Viṣṇu, having forgotten the inner one. (V, 43, 26.) Even the boons that come to you through the brilliant Viṣṇu, really come to you as results of your own efforts." (V, 43, 34.)<sup>1</sup>

Gods may or may not confer other things on us, but they cannot in any case remove our ignorance. It is a thing that we have to do ourselves. "The immense *Māyā* of world-experience comes to an end only through the victory over one's own mind, not by any other way. (V, 44, 1.) Viṣṇu, however long propitiated, and however pleased he may be, cannot bestow Self-knowledge on one who does not think himself. (V, 43, 10.) In fact, whatever is, anywhere or at any time, attained by any one, is attained by him through the application of his own energy, and not in any other way. (V, 43, 13.) Nothing great is ever achieved through any god, teacher or wealth. (V, 43, 17.) If

१ शास्त्रयत्नविचारेभ्यो मूर्खाणां प्रपलायिनाम् ।  
कल्पिता वैष्णवी भक्तिः प्रवृत्त्यर्थं शुभस्थितौ ॥  
क्रियते माधवादीनां प्रणयप्रार्थना स्वयम् ।  
तथैव क्रियते कस्मान्न स्वकस्यैव चेतसः ॥  
सर्वस्यैव जनस्यास्य विष्णुरभ्यन्तरे स्थितः ।  
तं परित्यज्य ये यान्ति बहिर्विष्णुं नराधमाः ॥  
वरमामोति यो वाऽपि विष्णोरमिततेजसः ।  
तेन स्वस्यैव तत्प्राप्तं फलमभ्यासशालिनः ॥

a spiritual preceptor (*guru*) can raise one up without one's own effort, why does he not raise a bull, an elephant, or a camel?" (V, 43, 16.)<sup>1</sup> Compare with the opinion of Vasiṣṭha what Emerson writes with regard to Self-reliance: "Though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. . . . Trust thyself. . . . Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide. . . . As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. . . . It is only when a man puts off all foreign support, and stands alone, that I see him to be strong and to prevail. . . . Nothing can bring you peace but yourself." (Emerson: *Essay on Self-reliance*.) Compare also "In vain does he make to himself gods, in order to get from them by prayers and flattery what can be accomplished only by his own will-power." (Beer: *Schopenhauer*, p. 44.) Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan also similarly says: "Each individual has to blaze out his own trail into the unknown. Each must tread the weary path up the steep mountain from the top of which alone the

<sup>1</sup> रामापर्यवसानेयं माया संसृतिनामिका ।

आत्मचित्तजयेनैव क्षयमायाति नान्यथा ॥

चिरमाराधितोऽप्येष परम्प्रीतिमानपि ।

नाविचारवतो ज्ञानं दातुं शक्नोति माधवः ॥

यथादासायते किञ्चित्केनचित्कचिदेव हि ।

स्वशक्तिसंप्रवृत्त्या तल्लभ्यते नान्यतः क्वचित् ॥

न हरेर्न गुरोर्नार्थात्किञ्चिदासायते महत् ॥

गुरुष्वेदुद्धृत्यज्ञात्मीयात्पौरुषादते ।

उद्धृ दान्तं बलीवर्दं तत्कस्मान्नोद्धृत्यसौ ॥



vision can be seen in all splendour. The teacher may put us on the way, speak to us of the hazards and hardships, but the grasping of the final mystery is an individual achievement." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *An Idealistic View of Life*, p. 121.)

The real God resides within every one. This body of mine is as good a temple of God as, probably better than, any other ever built by man. "The God spoken of (as the true object of worship), does not exist far away. He ever resides in the body as *Cin-mātra* (Pure Consciousness). (III, 7, 2.) It is the same which is immanent in S'iva, Viṣṇu, Sun and Brahmā. (III, 7, 4.) He is not very far away, nor to be found with much difficulty. He is the Bliss-Consciousness to be found out within one's own body. (III, 6, 3.) Those who, leaving the God residing within one's own heart, go to other gods are such as having thrown away the very precious gem they had in their hands desire to have ordinary glass-pieces." (V, 8, 14.)<sup>1</sup>

It is through knowledge alone that this God residing within the heart can be found out and attained. "This God of all gods is attained through knowledge alone and not through the pains of other performances. (III, 6, 1.) There is no other performance required here

१ य एष देवः कथितो नैष दूरेऽवतिष्ठते ।  
 शरीरे संस्थितो नित्यं चिन्मात्रमिति विश्रुतः ॥  
 चिन्मात्रमेव शशिभृच्चिन्मात्रं गरुडेश्वरः ।  
 चिन्मात्रमेव तपनश्चिन्मात्रं कमलोद्भवः ॥  
 न द्यौष दूरे नाभ्याशे नालभ्यो विषमे न च ।  
 स्वानन्दाभासरूपोऽसौ स्वदेहादेव लभ्यते ॥  
 संत्यज्य इद्रुहेशानं देवमन्यं प्रयान्ति ये ।  
 ते रत्नमभिवान्छन्ति त्यक्तहस्तस्थकौस्तुभाः ॥

than knowledge." (III, 6, 2.)<sup>1</sup> Compare a passage from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: "He is not grasped by the eye, nor by speech; nor by the senses; nor by *tapas*, nor by *karma*; when one's mind is purified by the clearness of knowledge, then alone he sees the invisible (Brahman) by contemplation. This subtle Self should be known by the mind . . . when it (mind) is purified, then *Ātman* shines out of itself." (*M. U.*, III, 1, 8, 9.)

How to worship the God residing within? "The artificial and showy ways of worshipping God are only for the ignorant and for those whose minds are not fully grown and are restless. (*VIa*, 30, 5.) But there is no necessity of any *āhvāna* or *mantra* (prayers, etc.,) for the God who is immanent everywhere and is our own Consciousness. (*VIa*, 35, 24.) He is not to be worshipped by lamps, incense-burning, offering of flowers, offering of food, besmearing with sandal-paste (*VIa*, 38, 23), saffron, camphor, or by various kinds of eatables. He is to be worshipped with one thing alone, which is always easily obtainable everywhere, *viz.*, knowledge. (*VIa*, 38, 24-25.) This is really the best *dhyāna* (meditation); this is verily the highest kind of worship. (*VIa*, 38, 25.) This is the greatest *yoga*, this is the best performance. (*VIa*, 38, 36.) This is the real worship of God, not the worship of any idol or form. (*VIa*, 29, 128.) He is to be worshipped with *dhyāna* (constantly thinking of Him), no other worship is required. (*VIa*, 38, 6.) He is to be worshipped with no

<sup>1</sup> अस्य देवाधिदेवस्य परस्य परमात्मनः ।

ज्ञानादेव परा सिद्धिर्न त्वनुष्ठानदुःखतः ॥

अत्र ज्ञानमनुष्ठानं न त्वन्यदुपयुज्यते ॥

other flowers but of self-control and Self-knowledge." (VIa, 29, 128.)<sup>1</sup>

A wise man always worships God by thinking of Him in spite of his being busy in the activities of life that have fallen to his share. Every moment a living presence of God is felt by the wise man, whatever he might be doing. He worships God by offering Him all that he does, gets or enjoys. His work itself is the worship of God; his enjoyments are the worship of God; and his thoughts and emotions are the worship of God, as he offers everything to Him. "He worships the inner God with all that he receives, with equanimity of the heart (VIa, 39, 30); by engaging himself in all that falls to his lot as a matter of course and not as desired by him (VIa, 39, 31); by proper food and drink, and enjoying all objects of enjoyment in so far as they fall to his lot (VIa, 39, 32);

<sup>1</sup> अच्युत्पन्नधियो ये हि बालपेलवचेतसः ।

कृत्रिमाचर्मयं तेषां देवाचनमुदाहृतम् ॥

संवेदनात्मकतया गतया सर्वगोचरम् ।

न तस्याह्वानमन्त्रादि किञ्चिदेवोपयुज्यते ॥

न दीपेन न धूपेन न पुष्पविभवापणैः ।

नान्नदानादिदानेन न चन्दनविलेपनैः ॥

न च कुङ्कुमकपूरभोगैश्चित्रैर्न चेतुरैः ।

नित्यमक्लेशलभ्येन शीतलेनाविनाशिना ॥

एकैवामृतेनैव बोधेन स्वेन पूज्यते ।

एतदेव परं ध्यानं पूजैषैव परा स्मृता ॥

एषोऽसौ परमो योग एषा सा परमा क्रिया ।

तत्तु देवाचनं विद्धि नाकारार्चनमर्चनम् ॥

पूजनं ध्यानमेवान्तर्नान्यदस्त्यस्य पूजनम् ॥

शमबोधादिभिः पुष्पैर्देव आत्मा यदर्च्यते ॥



by experiencing all kinds of pleasures with a balanced mind (VIa, 39, 34); by gladly enduring all kinds of troubles—diseases, sufferings and catastrophes, etc., as they come (VIa, 39, 35); by acting in accordance with one's position, whether he is a king or a beggar (VIa, 39, 37); by having sweet friendships (VIa, 39, 39); by a brave and strong character manifesting itself in his conduct, now of indifference, now of mercy, now of being pleased, etc., as occasion arises (VIa, 39, 40); by some times giving up all kinds of pleasure if the case requires it (VIa, 39, 41); by sometimes engaging in, and sometimes giving up, all kinds of good or bad actions (VIa, 39, 42); by disregarding all that is lost and gone, and remaining unaffected by the loss (VIa, 39, 44); by putting equal value on all objects whether they appear to be pleasant or painful (VIa, 39, 49); by equally giving up or possessing the objects of pleasure or pain (VIa, 39, 50); by accepting gladly all that happens to fall to his lot in accordance with time or place (VIa, 39, 53); and by always believing that he is the Infinite and the Whole Brahman." (VIa, 39, 48.)<sup>1</sup> (Summary translation.)

१ यथाप्राप्तेन सर्वेण तमर्चयति वस्तुना ।  
 समया सर्वया बुद्ध्या चिन्मात्रं देवचित्परम् ॥  
 यथाप्राप्तक्रमोत्थेन सर्वार्थेन समर्चयेत् ।  
 मनागपि न कर्तव्यो यत्तोऽत्रापूर्ववस्तुनि ॥  
 कामसंसेवनेनाथ पूजयेच्छोभनं विमुम् ॥  
 भक्ष्यभोज्यान्नपानेन नानाविभवशालिना ।  
 शयनासनयानेन यथाप्तेनार्चयेच्छिवम् ॥  
 सुखेन सर्वरूपेण संबुध्यात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 आधिभ्याधिपरीतेन मोहसंरम्भशालिना ।  
 सर्वोपद्रवदुःखेन प्राप्तेनात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥

In comparison with this worship of the inner God, the worship of an external god is quite an unimportant and secondary thing. It may, however, have some use for some persons. "The permanent and chief form of God is that which resides within the cave of the heart, the external one bearing a disc, conch-shell and the club (of Viṣṇu) is unimportant and secondary. (V, 43, 27.) He who runs after the secondary form, neglecting the chief one is like a fool who is searching for the nectar after having thrown that away which he had already in his possession. (V, 43, 28.) In the same way, the chief way of seeing God is thinking with one's own effort, and the secondary (*gauṇa*) way of seeing God is through getting a boon, etc. You should take recourse to the primary method. (V, 43, 11.) Effort and practice in thinking are the primary methods, and worship,

दारिद्र्येणाथ राज्येन प्रवाहपतितात्मना ।  
 विचित्रचेष्टापुण्येण शुद्धात्मानं समर्चयेत् ॥  
 मैत्र्या माधुर्यधर्मिण्या हृत्स्थमात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 उपेक्षया करुणया सदा मुदितया हृदि ।  
 शुद्धया शक्तिपद्धत्या बाधेनात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 आकस्मिकोपघातेन स्थितेनानियतेन च ।  
 भोगाभोगैकभोगेन प्राप्तेनात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 नष्टं नष्टमुपेक्षेत प्राप्तं प्राप्तमुपाहरेत् ॥  
 सर्वदा सर्वरूपेण सर्वाकारविकारिणा ।  
 सर्वं सर्वप्रकारेण प्राप्तेनात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 अनीहितं परित्यज्य परित्यज्य तथेहितम् ।  
 उभयाश्रयणेनापि नित्यमात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 देशकालक्रियायोगाद्यदुपैति शुभाशुभम् ।  
 अविकारं गृहीतेन तेनैवात्मानमर्चयेत् ॥  
 सर्वं ब्रह्मेति निश्चित्य नित्यात्मार्याव्रतं चरेत् ॥

etc., are secondary ones. (V, 43, 21.) If one cannot have recourse to the primary God and the primary method, let him worship the God in the external form, Viṣṇu. (V, 43, 30.) For, through the hardships of worshipping Him, and of undergoing the penances connected therewith, his mind will, in course of time, be purified. (V, 43, 31.) Through daily efforts and discrimination, the mind becomes purified, as a mango ripens. (V, 43, 32.) But in that case also, it is one's own Self that brings about the required results; the worship of Viṣṇu being only the external occasion." (V, 43, 33)<sup>1</sup>

Saṅkara lays great stress on renunciation of actions and household life for Self-realization. *Tyāga* and *Samnyāsa* seem to be quite indispensable for

<sup>1</sup> इन्द्रहासि चित्तत्वं मुख्यं सानातनं वपुः ।

शङ्खचक्रगदाहस्तो गौण आकार आत्मनः ॥

यो हि मुख्यं परित्यज्य गौणं समनुधावति ।

त्यक्त्वा रसायनं सिद्धं साध्यं संसाधयत्यसौ ॥

मुख्यः पुरुषयज्ञोऽथो विचारः स्वात्मदर्शने ।

गौणो वरादिको हेतुर्मुख्यहेतुपरो भव ॥

अभ्यासयत्नौ प्रथमं मुख्यो विधिरुदाहृतः ।

तदभावे तु गौणः स्यात्पूज्यपूजामयक्रमः ॥

अप्राप्तात्मविवेकोऽन्तरङ्गचित्तवशीकृतः ।

शङ्खचक्रगदापाणिमर्चयेत्परमेश्वरम् ॥

तत्पूजनेन कष्टेन तपसा तस्य राघव ।

काले निर्मलतामेति चित्तं वैराग्यकारिणा ॥

नित्याभ्यासविवेकाभ्यां चित्तमाशु प्रसीदति ।

आप्त एव दशमेति साहकारी शनैः शनैः ॥

एतदप्यात्मनैवात्मा फलमाप्नोति भाषितम् ।

हरिपूजाक्रमाख्येन निमित्तेनारिसूदन ॥



Self-realization according to him. Early Buddhism also is a philosophy of *Bhikṣukas* (recluses). The *Bhagavad-gītā*, on the other hand, seems to preach that the duties enjoined upon us by the *Sāstras* are not to be given up. They are to be performed without attachment, or personal motive. Absolute renunciation of actions is not possible, nor is required by Kṛṣṇa. The view of Vasiṣṭha is very much like that of Kṛṣṇa with regard to action. According to Vasiṣṭha performing or giving up any kind of action, whether it be religious, moral or worldly, is immaterial for attaining Liberation. It is foolish, according to him, to believe that action can be renounced. Life is action. Thought is action. As long as one is thinking or living, he is acting. Renunciation of physical and worldly activities is impossible. The root of action is desire or will. That is to be cut off. Personal desire and willing are to be given up and not actions. For Self-realization one has not to go to a forest renouncing the worldly duties and activities. The busy home-life is no bar to Self-realization. Renouncing the activities of life and residing in a forest do not in the least help one whose mind is not already at peace. The story of the queen Cūḍālā and her husband Sikhi-dhvaja is a beautiful illustration of this fact. Vasiṣṭha is very emphatic on the view that a wise man should prefer not to retire from the busy life of the world, although it is in no way binding on him. Most of his liberated living men rule over their kingdoms, and give the benefit of their wisdom to others. Here is in brief what he has said on the subject:

[“Individuality and action are not two things. The individual is action, and action is individuality. (Vib, 28, 8.)] As long as there is the world-experience,

activity cannot be separated from consciousness, from individuality. (VIb, 28, 6.) The inner consciousness manifests itself in volitions which are named as mind, action, imagination, etc. (VIb, 2, 34.) So long as one lives, the question of giving up or of performance of actions which are thoughts ultimately, is meaningless. (VIb, 2, 31.) Whether a man is enlightened or not, as long as he continues to be living in the body, his thinking continues. Its renunciation is impracticable. (VIb, 2, 35.) Renunciation of actions therefore is impossible as long as the body continues. (VIb, 2, 42.) Those who actually give up action do not succeed in giving it up at its root, which is volitional thought (or thought coloured with desire). (VIb, 2, 43.) This root cannot be cut down as long as one lives except by knowledge (or enlightenment=*bodha*). (VIb, 2, 44.) Whether a man acts or does not act physically, he undergoes the consequences in heaven or hell in accordance with his desires. (IV, 38, 4.) They, who give up external actions alone without giving up desires for them, (which can only be given up by right knowledge), effect a renunciation which is no renunciation at all. They in fact try to beat the empty sky with a stick. (VIb, 3, 34.) The devil of renunciation of actions devours those fools who attempt that renunciation of actions which is no renunciation at all. (VIb, 3, 26.) The home itself is a quiet forest for one with a peaceful mind, whereas a forest is like a city full of men and activities for one who is not at peace within. (VIb, 3, 38.) As long as one lives, the body will continue to be active. Why not then continue to do without murmuring those duties which fall to your lot? (VIb, 199, 5.) It does not even become those who have become liberated to give up the actions that fall naturally to their share as long as they

live here." (V, 26, 16.)<sup>1</sup> Compare the corresponding passages from the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "Nor can anyone, even for an instant, remain really actionless; for helplessly is everyone driven to action by the qualities born of Nature. (III, 5.) . . . Perform thou right action for, action is superior to inaction, and, inactive, even the maintenance of the body would not be possible." (III, 8.)

<sup>1</sup> कर्मैव पुरुषो राम पुरुषस्यैव कर्मता ।  
 एते ह्यभिज्ञे विद्वि त्वं यथा तुहिनशीतते ॥  
 मनागपि न मेदोऽस्ति संवित्स्पर्शन्दमयात्मनोः ।  
 कल्पनांशादृते राम सुष्ठौ पुरुषकर्मणोः ॥  
 एतच्चेतनमेवान्तर्विकसत्युद्भवभ्रमैः ।  
 वासनेच्छामनःकर्मसंकल्पाद्यभिधात्मभिः ॥  
 अस्य राघव सूक्ष्मस्य कर्मणो वेदनात्मनः ।  
 कस्त्यागः किमनुष्ठानं यावदेहमिति स्थितम् ॥  
 प्रबुद्धस्याप्रबुद्धस्य देहिनां देहगेहके ।  
 आदेहं विद्यते चित्तं त्यागस्तस्य न विद्यते ॥  
 त्यागो हि कर्मणां तस्मादादेहं नोपपद्यते ॥  
 यैस्तु संसृज्यते कर्म तन्मूलं तैर्न मुच्यते ।  
 मूलं स्वकर्मणः संविन्मनसो वासनात्मनः ॥  
 सा चादेहं समुच्छेत्तुभृते बोधान्न शक्यते ॥  
 कुर्वतोऽकुर्वतो वाऽपि स्वर्गोऽपि नरकोऽपि वा ।  
 यादृग्वासनमेतत्स्यान्मनस्तदनुभूयते ॥  
 ये त्वेव कर्मसंत्यागमकृत्वाऽन्यत्प्रकुर्वते ।  
 अत्यागं त्यागरूपात्म गगनं मारयन्ति ते ॥  
 अत्यागं त्यागमिति ये कुर्वते व्यर्थबोधिनः ।  
 सा भुङ्क्ते तान्पशून्शान्कर्मत्यागपिशाचिका ॥  
 गेहमेवोपशान्तस्य विजनं दूरकाननम् ।  
 अशान्तस्याप्यरण्यानी विजना सजना पुरी ॥



Knowledge alone, then, is the means of Liberation according to Vasiṣṭha. What then is the ideal of right knowledge that liberates us? It is arriving at the conviction that Brahman is the only Reality; everything here is Brahman, and nothing is which is not Brahman. It is in brief a living realization of the metaphysics of Vasiṣṭha. "The conviction that *Paramātmā* alone—Infinite, beginningless and endless Consciousness—is the Reality here, is *samyag jñānam* (the perfect knowledge). (V, 79, 2.) Right vision consists in the conviction that all the manifold things of the world—jars, clothes, etc.,—are nothing but the forms of the Self, other than which nothing exists. (V, 79, 3.) The enlightenment within one as to the fact that Consciousness never becomes unconsciousness; that It ever continues to be the same without any change or loss, and is inexpressible in terms, is right knowledge." (VIb, 190, 5.)<sup>1</sup>

This right knowledge can be acquired only through one's own thinking and effort. Nothing else will bring right knowledge home to any body. "The Divinity is known only through one's own effort and discrimination. (III, 6, 9.) He is seen by one's own intellect turned

यावदायुरिदं राम निश्चितं स्पन्दते तनुः ।  
तद्यथाप्राप्तमव्ययं स्पन्दतामपरेण किम् ॥  
राजन्यावदयं देहस्तावन्मुक्तधियामपि ।  
यथाप्राप्तक्रियात्यागो रोचते न स्वभावतः ॥

<sup>1</sup> अनाद्यन्तावभासात्मा परमात्मेह विशते ।  
इत्येको निश्चयः स्फारः सम्यग्ज्ञानं विदुर्बुधाः ॥  
इमा घटपटाकाराः पदार्थशतपङ्क्तयः ।  
आत्मैव नान्यदस्तीति निश्चयः सम्यगीक्षणम् ॥  
ज्ञानस्य ज्ञेयता नास्ति केवलं ज्ञानमव्ययम् ।  
अवाच्यमिति बोधोऽन्तः सम्यग्ज्ञानमिति स्मृतम् ॥

towards him. (VIa, 118, 4.) By no other process except one's own purified intellect, can that experience be realized. (V, 12, 18.) One should think on the Self, through one's own effort, and continue doing so until It is realized in experience." (V, 5, 6.)<sup>1</sup> Similarly "The Buddhists say that when our minds are clear of illusions, prejudices, and egoistic assumptions, they become transparent and reflect the truth like a dust-free mirror. The illumination thus gained in our consciousness constitutes the so called *pariniṣpanna*, the most perfect knowledge, that leads to Nirvāṇa, final Salvation, and eternal bliss." (Suzuki: *Mahā-yāna Buddhism*, p. 92.)

So in order that a man may be able to think correctly and to interpret his experience in the right and proper manner, it is necessary that his mind should be pure. Purification of mind is effected through the study of philosophical works, through association with wise persons, and through cultivating noble virtues. "Pure intellect capable of finding out the Reality is evolved, when its impurities drop down from it through constant study of good works, association with the wise ones, and through the performance of noble deeds. (V, 5, 5.) One should raise his mind himself for cutting off the root of his misery with intense *vairāgya*

- <sup>1</sup> स्वपौरुषप्रयत्नेन विवेकेन विकासिना ।  
 स देवो ज्ञायते राम न तपःज्ञानकर्मभिः ॥  
 दृश्यते स्वात्मनैवात्मा स्वया सत्त्वस्थया धिया ॥  
 पदमासाद्यते राम न नाम क्रिययाऽन्यया ॥  
 स्वयमेव विचारेण विचार्यात्मानमात्मना ।  
 यावन्नाधिगतं ज्ञेयं न तावदधिगम्यते ॥

(distaste for worldly things), the study of good books (*śāstra*), and cultivating noble virtues." (V, 21, 11.)<sup>1</sup>

Vasiṣṭha gives us some of the problems on which we should begin to think. They are: "What am I? How does the objective experience originate? Why is there death or birth?" (V, 58, 32.)<sup>2</sup> He asks us to observe that "Everything to which man sets his heart here is unstable and sure to perish without any doubt." (V, 9, 34.)<sup>3</sup> He makes us realize that "The world is unsubstantial (*asāra*), for everything here comes and goes away. Every sweet here has its bitter into which it turns in no time." (V, 9, 37.)<sup>4</sup> He asks us to think and realize that "Pleasures and pains are not at all experienced by the Self as such (V, 5, 33), nor are they experienced by the body as such. They are wholly due to ignorance." (V, 5, 33-34.)<sup>5</sup> He exhorts us to separate the Self from the body with which we have

<sup>1</sup> शास्त्रसंजनसत्कार्यसङ्गेनोपहतैस्तस्मात् ।

सारावलोकिनी बुद्धिर्जायते दीपकोपमा ॥

वैराग्येणाथ शास्त्रेण महत्त्वादिगुणैरपि ।

यत्नेनापद्विधातार्थं स्वयमेवोन्नयेन्मनः ॥

<sup>2</sup> कोऽहं कथमिदं किं वा कथं मरणजन्मनी ।

विचारयान्तरेखं त्वं महत्तामलमेग्र्यसि ॥

<sup>3</sup> येषु येषु पदार्थेषु भृति ब्रह्माति मानवः ।

तेषु तेष्वेव तस्यायं दृष्टो नाशोदयो भृशम् ॥

<sup>4</sup> आगमापायि विरसं दशवैषम्यदूषितम् ।

असारसारं संसारं किं तत्पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥

<sup>5</sup> मुखदुःखानुभावित्वमात्मनीत्यवबुध्यते ।

असत्यमेव गगने बिन्दुताम्रानते यथा ॥

मुखदुःखे न देहस्य सर्वातीतस्य नात्मनः ।

एते ह्यज्ञानकस्यैव तस्मिन्नेष्टे न कस्यचित् ॥



been identifying it and therefore suffering. "Be happy for ever by separating the real Self from the body with which it has been identified." (V, 5, 24.)<sup>1</sup>

From the Absolute point of view, however, as we have already seen, there is neither ignorance nor knowledge. Both neutralizing each other in the Absolute are fused into the Absolute Purity of Experience. Absolutely speaking, therefore, both knowledge and ignorance are appearances, *i.e.*, *Avidyā* (that which does not exist in reality). Ignorance is one aspect of the *Avidyā* and knowledge another. Knowledge destroys ignorance. This only means that one aspect of *Avidyā* destroys another. This is what Vasiṣṭha says in the following words: "The aspirant washes off the worse kind of *Avidyā* (ignorance) with the help of the better kind of *Avidyā* (knowledge), and when the washing is effected neither of them clings to him. It is like the washing act of a washerman who washes off impurities of clothes with other kind of impurities (soap, etc.). (VIa, 41, 6.) When by accidental (*kaka-taliya-vat*) juncture of the two opposite aspects of *Avidyā*, it is negated, the Self realizes the Self." (VIa, 41, 7.)<sup>2</sup>

Very much importance is attached to the Scriptures by later Vedāntins. But for Vasiṣṭha they are not of so much importance. For, as we have already seen

<sup>1</sup> मिश्रीभूतमिवानेन देहेनोपहतात्मना ।

व्यक्तीकृत्य स्वमात्मानं स्वस्था भवत मा चिरम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> अविद्यां श्रेष्ठयाऽश्रेष्ठं क्षालयन्निह तिष्ठति ।

मलं मलेनापहरन्पुक्तिजो रजको यथा ॥

काकतालीयवत्पञ्चादविद्याक्षय आगते ।

प्रपश्यत्यात्मनैवात्मा स्वभावस्यैष निश्चयः ॥

according to him the ultimate source of the knowledge of the Self is Experience. No *Sāstra* can make us realize the Self, if we do not make our own attempts along the right interpretation of our Experience, and thereby have the direct intuition of the Self. "The Ultimate Experience cannot be had through the *Sāstras*, or through the words of a teacher, or through the worship of any god. (VIb, 197, 18.) The Self is not shown by the *Sāstras*, nor by the teachings of a *guru* (teacher). It is known by oneself through one's own knowledge." (VIa, 41, 15.)<sup>1</sup> But Vasiṣṭha does not totally deny the value of the Scriptures or other philosophical works. They are suggestive to us of the existence of the Self and the Absolute of which our present state of knowledge and Experience is not aware. They help to purify our mind for right thinking. So Vasiṣṭha says: "Hear how, though not the cause of our knowledge, they (the *sāstras* and the teachings of a *guru*) become indirect causes of that. (VIb, 197, 19.) By practising and following the processes given in the *sāstras* our minds get purified and thus become capable of knowing the pure Self. (VIb, 197, 20.) *Sāstra* is the *sattvika* (purified) aspect of *Avidyā*. It can neutralize the *tamasa* (impure) aspect of ignorance. (VIb, 197, 21.) It is through the contact of one who intensely aspires with the *Sāstras* that the Self-knowledge is attained. (VIb, 197, 25.) The juice of the *Mahā Vakyas* (the

<sup>1</sup> न शास्त्रान् गुरोर्वाक्यान् दानन्निश्चरार्चनात् ।

एष सर्वपदातीतो बोधः संप्राप्यते परः ॥

शास्त्रार्थैर्बुध्यते नात्मा गुरोर्वचनतो न च ।

बुध्यते स्वयमेवैष स्वबोधवशतस्ततः ॥

great sayings of the *Upaniṣads*) can only be tasted in one's own Self-experience." (Vib, 197, 29.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> एतान्यकारणान्येव कारणत्वं गतान्यलम् ।  
 परमात्मैकविश्रान्तौ यथा राघव तच्छृणु ॥  
 शास्त्रादभ्यासयोगेन चित्तं यातं विशुद्धताम् ।  
 अनिच्छदेवमेवाशु पदं पश्यति पावनम् ॥  
 एतच्छास्त्रादविद्यायाः सात्त्विको भाग उच्यते ।  
 तामसः सात्त्विकेनास्या भागेनायाति संक्षयम् ॥  
 मुमुक्षुशास्त्रयोरेवं मिथः संबन्धमात्रतः ।  
 सर्वसंवित्पदातीतमात्मज्ञानं प्रवर्तते ॥  
 महावाक्यार्थनिग्यन्दं स्वात्मज्ञानमवाप्यते ।  
 शास्त्रादेरिक्षुरस्तः स्वादिव स्वानुभूतिः ॥



## CHAPTER IV

### PRACTICAL REALIZATION OF THE ABSOLUTE

*Jñāna* or knowledge that has been said by Vasiṣṭha to be the only means of Liberation is not a mere intellectual affair. It is much more than what we ordinarily understand by knowledge. As we have learnt at the commencement of our treatment of his metaphysics, knowledge for Vasiṣṭha is always direct experience. It is intuition of the object of knowledge. Self-knowledge in the fullest sense is actual living in the Absolute Experience. It is actual identification with the Reality. It is bringing oneself in tune with the Infinite Whole. It is thinking as the Absolute Self would think, feeling as the Absolute Self would feel, and acting as the Absolute Self would act. It is actually being transformed into the Absolute, as Gauḍa-pāda also urges: "Having known the nature of Spiritual Reality within and without, one should become the Reality, should ever rest in It, and should be firm in It." (*Maṇḍūkya-kārikas*, II, 38.) Only a person who has thus realized the Reality is entitled to be called a *jñānin* (knower). Others who do not thus live their knowledge, but use it for other ends are called by Vasiṣṭha *jñāna-bandhus* (i.e., those to whom knowledge is a helping friend in the world). The following is a distinction made by him between a *jñānin* and a *jñāna-bandhu*:

"I prefer an ignorant man to a *jñāna-bandhu*. (VIb, 21, 1.) A *jñāna-bandhu* is he who studies the

*śāstras* for worldly enjoyments, like an artisan who learns his art to earn his livelihood; but does not make any effort to bring into practice what he has learnt (VIb, 21, 3); he whose knowledge is not manifested in actions (VIb, 21, 4); he who thinks that clothes and meals are the sufficient fruits of his study of *śāstras*. He is really an artisan (*śilpin*) who puts his study to unphilosophical use. (VIb, 21, 5.) He is a *jñāna-bandhu* who follows the path of actions in accordance with the injunctions of the *Sruti*, and keeps aloof from knowledge. (VIb, 21, 6.) Self-knowledge is really the only knowledge worthy of the name. Other kinds of knowledge are merely the semblance of it, for they do not give us the essence of all things. (VIb, 21, 7.) They are *jñāna-bandhus* who are satisfied with other kinds of knowledge, and do not attain the knowledge of the Self." (VIb, 21, 8.)<sup>1</sup> It is needless to point out here that most of us are *jñāna-bandhus* judged by the standard of Vasiṣṭha.

१ अज्ञातारं वरं मन्ये न पुनर्ज्ञानबन्धुताम् ॥  
 व्याचष्टे यः पठति च शास्त्रं भोगाय शिल्पिवत् ।  
 यतते न त्वनुष्ठाने ज्ञानबन्धुः स उच्यते ॥  
 कर्मस्पन्देषु नो बोधः फलितो यस्य दृश्यते ॥  
 वसनाशनमात्रेण तुष्टाः शास्त्रफलानि ये ।  
 जानन्ति ज्ञानबन्धूंस्तान्विवाच्छास्त्रार्थशिल्पिनः ॥  
 प्रवृत्तिलक्षणे धर्मे वर्तते यः श्रुतोचिते ।  
 अदूरवर्तिज्ञानत्वान्ज्ञानबन्धुः स उच्यते ॥  
 आत्मज्ञानं विदुर्ज्ञानं ज्ञानान्यन्यानि यानि तु ।  
 तानि ज्ञानावभासानि सारस्यानवबोधनात् ॥  
 आत्मज्ञानमनासाद्य ज्ञानान्तरलवेन ये ।  
 संतुष्टाः कश्चेष्टं ते ते स्मृता ज्ञानबन्धवः ॥

A *jñānin* (knower), on the other hand, according to Vasiṣṭha is he "Who, through his knowledge and constant thought on the subject of his knowledge, has been raised to the state of experience where mind is no mind, and where there is no longer any consciousness of the fruits of actions (VIb, 22, 1); who is really at peace within, and whose peace is reflected in all his activities (VIb, 22, 3); who has known everything and who brings his knowledge into practice and thus becomes desireless (VIb, 22, 2); who is engaged in duties that fall to his share in course of his life, yet within his mind without any desire or attachment to them. (VIb, 22, 5.) Real *jñāna* (knowledge) is that *jñāna* which enables a man never to be again born into the world; knowledge utilized in earning livelihood is only a mercenary art." (VIb, 22, 4.)<sup>1</sup>

Real knowing is thus being. It is the actual transformation of the finite into the infinite, of the limited into the unlimited, of the individual into the Absolute. Philo is said to have similarly taught that "The knowledge of God consists only in the renunciation of self, in giving up individuality, and in becoming merged in Divine Primordial Being. The mind that wishes to hold

१ ज्ञानेन ज्ञेयनिष्ठत्वाद्योऽचित्तं चित्तमेव च ।  
 न बुध्यते कर्मफलं स ज्ञानीत्यभिधीयते ॥  
 अन्तःशीतलतेहामु प्राज्ञैर्यस्यावलोक्यते ।  
 अकृत्रिमैकशान्तस्य स ज्ञानीत्यभिधीयते ॥  
 ज्ञात्वा सम्यगनुज्ञानं दृश्यते येन कर्मसु ।  
 निर्वासनात्मकं ज्ञस्य स ज्ञानीत्यभिधीयते ॥  
 प्रवाहपतिते कार्ये कामसंकल्पवर्जितः ।  
 तिष्ठत्याकाशद्वयो यः स पण्डित उच्यते ॥  
 अपुनर्जन्मने यः स्याद्बोधः स ज्ञानशब्दभाक् ।  
 वसनाशनदा शेषा व्यवस्था शिल्पजीविका ॥



God must itself become God." (Windelband: *History of Philosophy*, Problem 18.) But it is not an easy thing. It cannot be magically produced in a moment. Our finitude is of long standing. A mere intellectual enlightenment may convince us of the illusoriness of our finitude and world-experience, yet the illusion continues to be experienced. A man suffering from an eye-disease, on account of which he sees the one moon as two, may be intellectually convinced that in reality there is only one moon, but the illusory doubleness of the moon forms still a part of his experience. He has not yet come to actually experience what he has been intellectually convinced of. Such knowledge is not of much use. Vasiṣṭha asks us not to be satisfied with that alone. He urges us to make constant and earnest efforts (*abhyasa*) to realize in our own experience what we are intellectually convinced of. "The present state of our experience is due to the (thinking, feeling and acting) habits of innumerable past lives. It cannot be easily got rid of without prolonged process of thinking and practice. (V, 92, 23.) *Abhyasa* (practice) means doing a thing over and over again. (VIb, 67, 43.) Without practice (in actualization of knowledge) Self-realization cannot be effected. (VIa, 11, 1.) The *abhyasa* in the knowledge of Self consists in always thinking of the Self, thinking of It, reminding one another of It, and being solely concerned with It. (III, 22, 24.) They are the *Brahmabhyasins* (those who are busy in realization of the Absolute Experience) who are making efforts in realizing the Absolute Experience in which the idea of subject and object will be entirely absent, with the help of reason as well as of the scriptures. (III, 22, 27.) Without practice one cannot actualize knowledge in his experience; but through it one can soon

and surely be installed in the peace of the Absolute Experience." (VIb, 155, 13.)<sup>1</sup>

The technical name given to the practice in Self-realization by Vasiṣṭha is *Yoga* (lit. union). He does not use this term in the restricted sense in which the schools of *Yoga* have used it. For him every method, which enables one to escape finitude or world-experience is *yoga*. "The method of crossing over the world is called *yoga*." (VIa, 13, 3.)<sup>2</sup> The ideal of *yoga* is installation in the Absolute Experience. "The ideal to be actualized by *yoga* is that fourth kind of experience, which means sharing in the Absolute, which is realization of great bliss, which is of the nature of Consciousness-bliss, and in which the other experiences, waking, sleep, etc., are not even potentially present. (VIa, 128, 50-51.) That state is not actually experienced unless our finitude (*manas*) is dissolved (*astam-gata*) in the ocean of nectar-like Peace." (VIa, 128, 52.)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> जन्मान्तरशताभ्यस्ता राम संसारसंस्थितिः ।  
सा चिराभ्यासयोगेन विना न क्षीयते क्वचित् ॥  
पौनःपुन्येन करणमभ्यास इति कथ्यते ॥  
अभ्यासेन विना साधो नाभ्युदेत्यात्मभावना ॥  
तच्चिन्तनं तत्कथनमन्योन्यं तत्प्रबोधनम् ।  
एतदेकपरत्वं च तदभ्यासं विदुर्बुधाः ॥  
अत्यन्ताभावसंपत्तौ ज्ञातृज्ञेयस्य वस्तुनः ।  
युक्त्या शास्त्रैर्यतन्ते ये ते ब्रह्माभ्यासिनः स्थिताः ॥  
नाभ्यासेन विना ज्ञाने शिवे विश्रान्तवानसि ।  
अभ्यासेन तु कालेन भृशं विश्रान्तिमेप्स्यसि ॥

<sup>2</sup> संसारोत्तरणे युक्तियोगशब्देन कथ्यते ॥

<sup>3</sup> जीवस्य च तुरीयाख्या स्थितिर्वा परमात्मनि ।  
अवस्थावाजनिद्रादिनिर्मुक्ता चित्सुखात्मिका ॥



What then should be the actual course of the process of Self-realization? We can find out a definite scheme of the method of Self-realization in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, which does not neglect any aspect of our life. Our present life has three aspects, spiritual, mental and physical. The first may be said to be that which corresponds to what has been called the subconscious self by some modern writers. It is the store-house of all our instincts, tendencies, dispositions, etc. The second is our conscious mental life of thoughts, emotions, desires, etc. The third is the physical body which is being run on by the perpetual movements of vital currents (*prāṇas*). All these aspects have very intimate connection with one another. In order that we may cease from the finite experience of this or that particular life, and may live in the Absolute Experience, it is necessary that we should free ourselves from the limitations of body, mind and individuality (which is the subconscious mind). We therefore require a scheme of culture or practice which will enable us to transmute ourselves into the Infinite Brahman by taking hold of that side of our experience for which we are most fit. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, suggests three lines along which we should proceed to realize the Absolute Experience, and also tells us that any one of them may be selected according to one's convenience and bent of mind. "The term *yoga* stands for (1) deep affirmation of the One Reality, (2) control of the mind, and (3) stopping of the movements of the vital currents (*prāṇas*). (VIa, 69, 27.) If any one of them is fully accomplished,

योगस्य सेयं वा निष्ठा सुखं संवेदनं महत् ॥  
 मनस्यस्ते गते पुंसां तदन्यन्नोपलभ्यते ।  
 प्रशान्तामृतकल्लोले केवलामृतवारिधौ ॥



the others would follow." (VIa, 69, 40.)<sup>1</sup> He is, however, inclined to prefer the second method to the other two, probably because it is easier than the others, and it is also more attractive to a cultured man. "Of all the three methods of realization, the control of mind is the best, because it is easily effected and so leads to peace soon." (VIa, 69, 29.)<sup>2</sup> We shall now learn more about these methods one after another.

### I. *Practice in deep affirmation of the One Reality.*

"Through constant practice in deep affirmation of one's being the One Reality, the mind comes to peace, and when the mind is thus merged in the Reality, the activity of the *prāṇas* is totally stopped." (VIa, 69, 48.)<sup>3</sup> This may be effected along three lines. One may meditate on the fact of his being one with the Absolute Brahman, and go on affirming that he is the Brahman. Or through realization of the absolute non-entity (unreality) of objects as other than the Self, one may affirm his being the Absolute and the only Reality. Or, through the negation of the subject-object idea from Reality as such, one may realize that he is the only Reality above the distinction of subject and object. The first process may be called *Brahma-bhāvanā*, the second, *Padārtha-bhāvanā-tyāga*, and *Kevali-bhāva*.

<sup>1</sup> एकतत्त्वधनाभ्यासः प्राणानां विलयस्तथा ।

मनोविनिग्रहश्चेति योगशब्दार्थसंग्रहः ॥

एकार्थाभ्यासनप्राणरोधचेतःपरिश्रयाः ।

एकस्मिन्नेव संसिद्धे संसिध्यन्ति परस्परम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> त्रिष्वेतेषु प्रयोगेषु मनःप्रशमनं वरम् ।

साध्यं विद्धि तदेवाशु यथा भवति तच्छिवम् ॥

<sup>3</sup> एकतत्त्वधनाभ्यासाच्छान्तं शाम्यत्यलं मनः ।

तल्लीनत्वात्स्वभावस्य तेन प्राणोऽपि शाम्यति ॥

On the first Vasīṣṭha says: "One becomes that which one constantly affirms to be (*bhāvayati*); he fills himself with power, however great it may be, in accordance with one's affirmation. (IV, 11, 59.) The self becomes the Infinite Whole (*anantam akhilam*) through affirming itself to be that. (IV, 11, 60.) So, first think on the Infinite Self, and then transmute your mind into that. Being merged in that experience, the mind comes to calmness. (VIa, 69, 49.) The mind of one who concentrates on the Absolute vanishes for the want of its finite or limited objects, and the activity of the *prāṇas* also stops, leaving the Absolute shining alone." (VIa, 69, 52.)<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the second, *Padārtha-bhavana-tyāga*, we learn the following from Vasīṣṭha: "If the world-appearance which is as unreal as the colour of the sky is realized to be unreal, the nature of the Brahman is known. (III, 7, 27-28.) The Absolute Reality cannot be known, unless the impossibility of Its becoming the objective world is realized. (III, 7, 30.) When the possibility of the world being real is realized to be baseless, one attains to the state of *nir-vikalpa* (thoughtless) *śamādhi* (intense concentration of the mind on the Self). (III, 21, 78.) Without the realization

- <sup>1</sup> यथैव भावयत्यात्मा सततं भवति स्वयम् ।  
 तथैवापूर्यते शक्त्या शीघ्रमेव महानपि ॥  
 भाविता शक्तिरात्मानमात्मतां नयति क्षणात् ।  
 अनन्तमखिलं प्रावृण्महिम्ना महती यथा ॥  
 विचार्य यदनन्तात्मतत्त्वं तन्मयतां नय ।  
 मनस्ततस्तत्तद्भूयेन तदेव भवति स्थिरम् ॥  
 प्रत्याहारवतां चेतः स्वयं भोग्यक्षयादिव ।  
 विलीयते सह प्राणैः परमेवावशिष्यते ॥

of absolute non-entity of the world in the Absolute, Liberation which consists in the absence of the experience of the ego and the world, is not realized." (III, 21, 12.)<sup>1</sup> "Denial", we must remember, "is the creative force of mind used as a dissolving or disintegrating power." (Wase: *Inner Teachings and Yoga*, p. 37.)

*Kevali-bhava* is the experience of the Self being free from the feeling of subjectivity consequent on the realization of the unreality of objectivity; subject and object being relative to each other. The Absolute Reality is beyond both subject and object, both of which are equally unreal and relative. *Kevali-bhava* consists in affirming the Self to be free from both subjectivity and objectivity. Thus says he: "*Kevali-bhava* is the experience when the Self realizes Itself to be free from subjectivity as a consequence of the object being realized to be unreal. (III, 4, 53.) The *kevali-bhava* of the Self (subject) is effected when the ego and the three worlds are realized to be unreal. (III, 4, 56.) That state being realized, all desires, likes and dislikes drop down from the personality, and the movements of the *prāṇas* come to rest." (III, 4, 54.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> भ्रमस्य जागतस्यास्य जातस्याकाशवर्णवत् ।

अत्यन्ताभावसंबोधे यदि रूढिरलं भवेत् ॥

तज्ज्ञातं ब्रह्मणो रूपं भवेन्नान्येन कर्मणा ॥

जगन्नाम्नोऽस्य दृश्यस्य स्वसत्तासंभवं विना ।

बुध्यते परमं तत्त्वं न कदाचन केनचित् ॥

संसारसंभवश्चायं निर्मूलत्वमुपेक्ष्यति ।

निर्विकल्पसमाधानं प्रतिष्ठामलमेव्यति ॥

अत्यन्ताभावसंपत्तिं विनाहंताजगत्स्थितेः ।

अनुत्पादमयी शोषा नोदेत्येव विमुक्तता ॥

<sup>2</sup> यद् द्रष्टुरस्याद्रष्टृत्वं दृश्याभावे भवेद्बलात् ।

तद्विद्धि केवलीभावं तत एवास्तः सतः ॥



[ Compare what a modern writer says with regard to the realization of the Absolute Experience: "The first great stage or degree is where you realize the unreality of all those things which you have hitherto considered real. It is the great denial of the reality of external things, in the light of the all-ness of God, the Changeless One. The reality of the changing, temporal universe has to be denied, and the denial must be followed by a mental affirmation of the perfection of the One reality. (p. 30) . . . The second stage or degree is where having dissolved the gross and imperfect in the refined and perfect, the Light of the Logos appears. The One reality is seen. . . . The third initiation is the Synthesis. It is a point where you come back to the things of the external world, and see that, informing them, in every atom, in every part, and in every speck of space is the living, breathing presence of God. *All is Brahman.*" (Wase: *The Inner Teachings and Yoga*, p. 33.) ]

## II. *Control and stoppage of the activity of the Prāṇas.*

Although from the systematic point of view our treatment of this topic should come after we have dealt with the control and annihilation of the *manas* (mind), we propose to treat of it first so that we may devote the rest of this chapter to the other problem which has been treated at length by Vasiṣṭha, and on which he lays more stress. In connection with the present topic, we must remember what we have already learnt about the mechanism of breathing from Vasiṣṭha.

त्रिजगत्त्वमहं चेति दृश्येऽस्तत्तामुपागते ।

दृष्टुः स्यात्केवलीभावस्तादृशो विमलः प्रमनः ॥

तत्तामुपागते भावे रागादेषादिवासनाः ।

शाम्यन्त्यस्पन्दिते वाते स्पन्दनक्षुब्धता यथा ॥

Vasiṣṭha believes that *prāṇa* and mind are very intimately connected. The movements of *prāṇa* are the physical manifestations of the activity of the mind, and the activities of the mind are the movements of *prāṇa* manifested on the psychical side. One is the other side of the other. What is *prāṇa* physically is the mind on the psychical plane. There is perfect identity and parallelism between the psychical and the physical aspects of our being. He seems to agree with the psycho-physical parallelists of modern times, that every psychical fact has its correlative on the physical side and *vice versa*. But this is true, according to Vasiṣṭha, only empirically. He is ultimately an idealist, and never forgets to remind us that even this parallelism is ultimately mind-created. In accordance with his parallelistic view, he holds that the control and stoppage of the movements of *prāṇa* are that of the mind and *vice versa*. This is what we learn from the following passages: "The mind has imagined *prāṇa*, and has also imagined that *prāṇa* is its own movement, without which it will never exist. Ever since this imagination, its activities correspond with those of the *prāṇa*. (VIb, 139, 2.) As the mind thinks so it becomes. It thought that the *prāṇa* is its life, so it exists in the *prāṇa* now. (VIb, 139, 10.) As the stoppage of the movements of a fan and that of the wind are the same fact, so also the stoppage of the movements of the *prāṇa* and the stoppage of the activities of the mind are one and the same fact. (VIa, 69, 41.) Through stopping the movements of the *prāṇa* the mind is surely stopped from its activities. (V, 78, 15.) When the *prāṇa-sakti* is at rest, mind is no more. (V, 13, 83.) And when the mind is no longer in motion, the objective world vanishes. (V, 78, 16.) (Similarly), when the activities

of the mind are stopped, the movements of the *prāṇa* also stop." (VIa, 69, 44.)<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore important to understand how the activities of the *prāṇa* can be brought under control and how they can be stopped altogether. Unfortunately, however, Vasiṣṭha has not made the latter aspect of the problem clear. He has, as we shall see, very summarily dismissed it, probably because he might have thought that it is dangerous to meddle with the movements of the *prāṇa* without a proper guide.

The *Prāṇa*, according to Vasiṣṭha, is the vital energy, the currents of which flow all round in the body to keep every organ of the body alive and active. "Some current of it moves the eyes. (VIa, 24, 28); some resides in the sense of touch; some goes to the nose; some digests food; some functions in the tongue. (VIa, 24, 29.) In short the *Prāṇa* moves the body as a machine with Its own force." (VIa, 24, 30.)<sup>2</sup> Here

तेन संकल्पितः प्राणः प्राणो मे गतिरित्यपि ।  
 न भवामि विनाऽनेन तेन तत्तत्परायणम् ॥  
 एवं यन्मनसाऽभ्यस्तमुपलब्धं तथैव तत् ।  
 तेन मे जीवितं प्राणा इति प्राणे मनः स्थितम् ॥  
 तालवृन्तस्य संस्पन्दे शान्ते शान्तो यथाऽनिलः ।  
 प्राणानिलपरिस्पन्दे शान्ते शान्तं तथा मनः ॥  
 तस्मिन्संरोधिते नूनमुपशान्तं भवेन्मनः ॥  
 प्राणशक्तौ निरुद्धायां मनो राम विलीयते ॥  
 मनःस्पन्दोपशान्त्याऽयं संसारः प्रविलीयते ॥  
 तथा शान्ते मनःस्पन्दे शाम्यन्ति प्राणवायवः ॥

<sup>2</sup> अस्य काचिन्मुने शक्तिः प्रस्पन्दयति लोचने ॥  
 काचित्स्पशमुपादत्ते काचिद्ब्रह्म नासया ।  
 काचिदन्नं जरयति काचिद्वक्ति वचांसि च ॥



we have to deal with that aspect of the *Prāṇa* which concerns inhalation and exhalation of the breath, which are very intimately connected with our life. Before we attempt to bring under our control or stop the activity of the *prāṇa*, we must understand the natural course of the breathing activity of the *prāṇa*, on which we have first to concentrate our attention according to Vasiṣṭha: "Now hear me describing the course of the *prāṇa* that is going on whether a man is waking or asleep" (VIa, 25, 5):<sup>1</sup>

We must note that in the following description the term *prāṇa* is used in a restricted sense of exhalation, and *apāna* is used for inhalation of breath. "The *prāṇa* arises from the *hṛdaya* (lungs?) and spreads out up to 12 *aṅgulas* (about 6 inches) from the tip of the nose. The *apāna* arises outside at a distance of 12 *aṅgulas* from the nose. (VIa, 25, 29-30.) The *apāna* arises just where the *prāṇa* ends and *vice versa*. (VIa, 25, 31.) The *prāṇa* has its movement directed towards the external space, whereas the *apāna* has its movement towards the internal space of the body. The former moves up out of the body like the flame of fire, and the latter moves down in the body like water." (VIa, 25, 32-33.)<sup>2</sup>

बहुनाऽत्र किमुक्तेन सर्वमेव शरीरेके ।

करोति भगवान्वायुर्यन्त्रेहामिव यान्त्रिकः ॥

<sup>1</sup> जाग्रतः स्वपतश्चैव प्राणायामोऽयमुत्तमः ।

प्रवर्तते यतस्तज्ज्ञ तत्तावच्छ्रेयसे शृणु ॥

<sup>2</sup> प्राणापानगतिं प्राप्य सुखस्थः सुखमेधते ।

प्राणस्याभ्युदयो ब्रह्मन्पद्मपत्रादृदि स्थितात् ॥

द्वादशाङ्गुलपर्यन्ते प्राणोऽस्तं यास्यं बहिः ।

अपानस्योदयो बाह्याद् द्वादशान्तान्महामुने ॥

Now the technicalities of the natural *Prāṇāyāma* (lit. breath-control) are pointed out: "The natural flow of the *prāṇa* out from the body, from the lotus of the heart (lungs), is called *recaka*. (VIa, 25, 6.) The inhalation of the air from 12 *aṅgulas* outside the body is called *pūraka* (filling). (VIa, 25, 7.) The state of *prāṇa* (in general sense) when inhalation is complete and exhalation has not yet begun, is called natural *kumbhaka*. It is a state which ordinary people do not notice, but the *yogins* know it to exist." (VIa, 25, 9.)<sup>1</sup>

In order to acquire control over the *Prāṇa*, the *yogin* should first practise to have concentration and control over the natural flow of the *Prāṇa* which is concerned with breathing in and out. The following are the various exercises in this connection: The existence of the *apāna* in a definite form perceptible only to the *yogins*, at 12 *aṅgulas*' distance from the body in the atmosphere, like a ready-made jar within a heap of clay, before its actually entering the body, is called *kumbhaka* (from the external point of view). (VIa, 25, 13-14.) This is (1) the *External Kumbhaka*. "The

अस्तंगतिरथाम्मोजमध्ये हृदयसंस्थिते ।

प्राणो यत्र समायाति द्वादशान्ते नभःपदे ॥

पदात्तस्मादपानोऽयं खादेति समनन्तरम् ।

बाह्याकाशोन्मुखः प्राणो वहत्यग्निशिखा यथा ।

द्वादशाशोन्मुखोऽपानो निम्ने वहति वारिवत् ॥

<sup>1</sup> बाह्योन्मुखत्वं प्राणानां यद्गृह्णन्मुजकोटरात् ।

स्वरसेनास्तयज्ञानां तं धीरा रेचकं विदुः ॥

द्वादशाङ्गुलपर्यन्तं बाह्यमाक्रमतामधः ।

प्राणानामङ्गुलसंस्पर्शो यः स पूरक उच्यते ॥

अपानेऽस्तंगते प्राणो यावन्नाभ्युदितो हृदि ।

तावत्सा कुम्भकावस्था योगिभिर्द्यानुभूयते ॥

movement of the *apāna* from the distance of 12 *āṅgulas* to the tip of the nose is called (2) the *external pūraka* by the experts in *yoga*. (VIa, 25, 14-15.) According to some *yogins* the movement of the air from the tip of the nose to the distance of 12 *āṅgulas* is called (2) the *external pūraka*. (VIa, 25, 15-16.) (This seems to be the more correct view, because from the external point of view this is really a *kumbhaka*). The rising of the *apāna* at a distance of 12 *āṅgulas* and its remaining still outside the body is called the *external recaka* (3). (There seems to be a mistake in the text in naming it as the external *kumbhaka*)." (VIa, 25, 18-19.)<sup>1</sup> In the same way we can have (4) *internal kumbhaka*, (5) *internal recaka*, and (6) *internal pūraka*, from the point of view of them within the body. They have been mentioned in the above paragraph as simply *pūraka*, *recaka*, and *kumbhaka*.

There are two occasions in the perpetual movement of the *Prāṇa*, which deserve attention and concentration of the *yogin*. They are the two *kumbhakas*, the external and the internal. "When the last streak of the *apāna*

<sup>1</sup> द्वादशाङ्गुलपर्यन्ते नासाग्रसमसंमुखे ॥  
 व्योम्नि नित्यमपानस्य तं विदुः कुम्भकं बुधाः ।  
 बाह्योन्मुखस्य वायोऽयं नासिकाप्रावधिर्गतिः ॥  
 तं बाह्यपूरकं त्वाद्यं विदुर्योगविदो जनाः ।  
 नासाग्रादपि निर्गत्य द्वादशान्तावधिर्गतिः ॥  
 या वायोस्तं विदुर्धरा अपरं बाह्यपूरकम् ।  
 बहिरस्तंगते प्राणे यावन्नापान उद्गतः ॥  
 तं बाह्यरेचकं विद्याच्चिन्त्यमानं विमुक्तिदम् ।  
 द्वादशान्ताद्यदुत्थाय रूपपीवरता परा ॥  
 अपानस्य बहिःश्वं तमपरं पूरकं विदुः ।  
 बाह्यानाभ्यन्तराब्धेतान्कुम्भकादीननारतम् ॥



(moon) has subsided in the heart, and the first streak of the *prāṇa* (sun) has not yet taken its rise (i.e., the internal *kumbhaka*) is the state having stayed in which the *yogin* is no more troubled. (VIa, 25, 36-37.) When the *prāṇa* has finished itself at a distance of 12 *āṅgulas* from the body and the *apāna* has not taken its rise from there yet (i.e., the external *kumbhaka*) is also a state having stayed in which for a long time, the *yogin* no more suffers troubles." (VIa, 25, 50-51.)<sup>1</sup> This means that a *yogin* (practiser) should try to prolong through practice that state in which neither exhalation nor inhalation is taking place, but both of them absent, either internally or externally.

How this *nirodha* (stoppage) of the movements of *prāṇa* and *apāna* is effected is very summarily described in the following passages: "The movements of *Prāṇa* can be stopped through *vairāgya* (want of interest in the world), meditation on the ultimate cause, practice, methodical procedure, giving up bad habits (V, 13, 85); by having a distrust in the world through the study of the *sāstras*, company of the good, practice in *yoga* (V, 78, 18); through concentration on one's object of love, and meditation on One Reality (V, 78, 19); through the practice of the *pūraka*, etc., and through solitary meditation (V, 78, 20); through concentration on

<sup>1</sup> अपानशशिनोऽन्तःस्था कला प्राणविवस्वता ॥

यत्र प्रस्ता तदासाद्य पदं भूयो न शोच्यते ।

प्राणार्कस्य तथाऽन्तःस्था यत्रापानसितांशुना ॥

अस्तं गतवति प्राणे त्वपानेऽभ्युदयोन्मुखे ॥

बहिःकुम्भकमालम्ब्य चिरं भूयो न शोच्यते ।

अपानेऽस्तं गते प्राणे किञ्चिदभ्युदयोन्मुखे ।

अन्तःकुम्भकमालम्ब्य चिरं भूयो न शोच्यते ॥

the last part of the sound of the syllable *OM*; through making the worldly consciousness asleep (V, 78, 21); through the practice of *recaka*, so that the *prāṇa* is no longer in motion (V, 78, 22); through the prolonged practice of *kumbhaka* (V, 78, 24); by directing the current of the *prāṇa* through the upper hole (to the *Brahma-randhra*) by stopping its usual passage with the tongue fixed at the root of the palate (V, 78, 25); when the consciousness of concentration even is lost in the subtle ether of consciousness in which there is no activity or thought (V, 78, 26); when the thinking process stops in concentration at the distance of 12 *aṅgulas* from the tip of the nose (V, 78, 27); when one attains peace by concentrating on the point between the eye-brows (V, 78, 28); when the movement of the *Prāṇa* is made to be lost in a place within the brain at a distance of 12 *aṅgulas* from the palate, by sending it through the upper hole (V, 78, 29); through being lost in the thought of the ether of consciousness on account of being desireless and in intense meditation (V, 78, 30); through the mind attached to the pure Consciousness, which is free from desires (V, 78, 31); by taking one's stay in the knowledge which flashes into our mind for a moment only on occasions (V, 78, 38); through these methods, as well as others that may be taught by various teachers, the movements of the *Prāṇa* can be stopped." (V, 78, 39.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> वैराग्यात्कारणाभ्यासाद्युक्तितो व्यसनक्षयात् ।

परमार्थावबोधश्च रोध्यन्ते प्राणवायवः ॥

शास्त्रसंज्ञनसंपर्कवैराग्याभ्यासयोगतः ।

अनास्थायां कृतास्थायां पूर्वसंसारवृत्तिषु ॥

यथाभिवाञ्छितध्यानाच्चिरमेकतयोदितात् ।

एकतत्त्वधनाभ्यासात्प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥

### III. Control and stoppage of the activity of the Mind.

*Manas*, as we have already noticed, is the most important concept of Vasīṣṭha's philosophy. It is that which in its static is the Brahman, and in its dynamic aspect constitutes the individual and his world. Vasīṣṭha's philosophy might be called the statics and dynamics of

पूरकादिनिजायामाद् दृढाभ्यासादखेदजात् ।  
 एकान्तध्यानसंयोगात्प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 ओङ्कारोच्चारणप्रान्तशब्दतत्त्वानुभावनात् ।  
 सुषुप्ते संविदो जाते प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 रेचके नूनमभ्यस्ते प्राणे स्फारे खमागते ।  
 प्राणे प्रशान्तसंचारे प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 कुम्भके कुम्भवत्कालमनन्तं परितिष्ठति ।  
 अभ्यासात्स्तम्भिते प्राणे प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 तालुमूलगतां यन्नाजिह्वाऽऽक्रम्य घण्टिकाम् ।  
 ऊर्ध्वरन्ध्रगते प्राणे प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 समस्तकलनोन्मुक्ते न किञ्चिन्नाम सूक्ष्मखे ।  
 ध्यानात्संविदि लीनायां प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 द्वादशाङ्गुलपर्यन्ते नासाग्रे विमलाम्बरे ।  
 संविद्दृशि प्रशाम्यन्त्यां प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 भ्रूमध्ये तारकालोकशान्तावन्तमुपागते ।  
 चेतने केतने बुद्धे प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 अभ्यासादूर्ध्वरन्ध्रेण तालुर्ध्वं द्वादशान्तगे ।  
 प्राणे गलितसंबृते प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 षट्स्थेयव यदुद्धूतं ज्ञानं तस्मिन्दृढाश्रिते ।  
 असंश्लिष्टविकल्पांशे प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 तस्मात्संविन्मये शुद्धे हृदये हृतवासनः ।  
 बलाजियोजिते चित्ते प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥  
 एभिः क्रमैस्तथाऽन्यैश्च नानासंकल्पकल्पितैः ।  
 नानादेशिकवक्त्रस्थैः प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥



the mind. The movements of the mind towards objectification bring about the world-experience with all its good and evil, pleasure and pain, life and death, etc., The stoppage of this tendency of the mind, which in fact is the annihilation of the mind as such, is another name for the realization of infinity of the Self. Our being an individual is responsible for our experiencing the illusory world. The very moment we succeed in breaking the shell of individuality we are the infinite whole. "The release from the world of trouble, risk and adventure", as Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan puts it, "can be had only by losing the separate self." (*The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 449.) The more we cease to be minds (i.e., centres of individual willing, individual thinking, and individual feeling), the more we are the Infinite Self. And if we could cease to be minds absolutely, we are the absolute Brahman shining in Its own glory. "The mind is the nave of the wheel of the world-illusion. If one can stop it from moving, the world-wheel stops, and ceases to trouble us. (V, 49, 40.) One should, therefore, apply all his efforts, strength, intellect and ingenuity in controlling the mind, the nave of the wheel of the *samsāra*. (VIa, 29, 7-8.) Through the victory over the mind everything is attained. (V, 24, 15.) By annihilating the mind the world-experience is annihilated, as by the destruction of a jar, the jar-space is annihilated. (V, 50, 14.) When the mind is given up, all conceptions of duality and unity vanish. What remains is the Absolute Peace, the pure and spotless One. (VIa, 93, 44.) The mind is the field where the crops of the world-experience grow. When the field is no longer in existence, where will the crops grow? (VIa, 93, 45.) There is only one effective remedy for the troubles of the world, namely,

the control of one's own mind. (IV, 35, 2.) All pains cease when the mind is annihilated." (III, 112, 9.)<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note here that according to Aśva-ghoṣa also the objective world vanishes and enlightenment dawns when the mind is annihilated: "All things, simply on account of our confused subjectivity (*smṛti*), appear under the form of individuation. If we could overcome our confused subjectivity, the signs of individuation would disappear, and there would be no trace of the world of (individual and isolated) objects." (Suzuki: *Awakening of Faith*, p. 56.) "When the mind is disturbed, the multiplicity of things is produced; but when the mind is quieted, the multiplicity of things disappears." (*Ibid.*, p. 78.) "By pure wisdom we understand that when one, by virtue of perfuming power of *dharma*, disciplines himself truthfully and accomplishes meritorious deeds, the mind (*i.e.*, *ālaya-vijñāna*) which implicates itself with birth and death will be *broken* down and the modes of evolving consciousness will be

१ चित्तं नाभिः किलास्येह मायाचक्रस्य सर्वतः ।  
 स्थीयते चेत्तदाक्रम्य तत्र किञ्चित्प्रवाधते ॥  
 परं पौरुषमास्थाय बलं प्रज्ञां च युक्तिः ॥  
 नाभिं संसारचक्रस्य चित्तमेव निरोधयेत् ॥  
 तस्मिञ्जिते जितं सर्वं सर्वमासादितं भवेत् ।  
 चित्तनाशे न संसारः कुम्भनाशे न कुम्भखम् ॥  
 चित्ते त्यक्ते लयं याति द्वैतमैक्यं च सर्वतः ।  
 शिष्यते परमं शान्तमच्छ्रेयमनामयम् ॥  
 अस्याश्चित्तं विदुः क्षेत्रं संसृतेः सत्यसंततेः ।  
 क्षेत्रे त्वक्षेत्रतां याते शालेः क इव संभवः ॥  
 संसारस्यास्य दुःखस्य सर्वोपद्रवदायिनः ।  
 उपाय एक एवास्ति मनसः स्वस्य निग्रहः ॥  
 मनोविलयमात्रेण दुःखशान्तिरवाप्यते ।



annulled, and the pure and genuine wisdom of *dharma-kāya* will manifest itself." (*Ibid.*, p. 67.) Gauḍa-pāda also similarly says: "The whole duality of whatever form, is simply a phenomenon of the mind, and it is never experienced when the mind is no longer mind." (*Maṇḍūkya-kārikas*, III, 31.)

Before learning the methods of mind-control suggested by Vasiṣṭha, let us note, how, according to him the mind becomes more and more gross (*piṇa*), a thing which we should always take care to avoid. "The mind grows denser by taking the Self to be the not-Self; by trusting in the body; by attachment to the family; by egoistic activities; by the intoxication of possession; by the thought 'It is mine'; by the pains of old age and death; by the vain desire of rising in the world; by indulging in poisonous evil conduct; by worries and diseases; by the consolations offered by the world; by making efforts in attaining what is desired and avoiding what is disliked; by love; by avarice for wealth; by the enjoyment of the pleasure of sex and wealth which are agreeable only at their beginning; by drinking the milk of wrong desires; by the increase of sensual enjoyments; by such a conduct in the world as presupposes faith in it; by the love of body which has a beginning and an end; and by the violent pleasures that terminate in the poison of pain." (V, 50, 57-63.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> अनात्मन्यात्मभावेन देहमात्रास्थयाऽनया ॥

पुत्रदारकुटुम्बैश्च चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।

अहंकारविकारेण ममतामलहेलया ॥

इदं ममेति भावेन चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।

जरामरणदुःखेन व्यर्थमुन्नतिमीयुषा ॥

दोषादीविषकोशेन चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।



But the same mind which becomes more and more gross and finite by the above mentioned causes, can be refined and expanded into the Infinite Brahman by other kinds of thoughts, emotions and activities. "The mind becomes the Self by being directed to the Absolute and thus becoming desireless and thoughtless. (III, 98, 2.) The mind can be caused to dissolve by thinking on its nature (*vicāra*), and when dissolved, it becomes the Good (*śreyas*). (III, 97, 10.) The mind of the awakened ones is Brahman. It is nothing else. (III, 100, 2.) When the mind ceases to be experienced by its being negated to be real, the pure Consciousness is experienced as the Universal Being." (V, 55, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

How then to control the mind and dissolve it into the Infinite Brahman? There is a method of doing everything, and success is sure only when one does it

आधिव्याधिविलासेन समाश्वासेन संसृतेः ॥  
 हेयोपादेययत्नेन चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।  
 स्नेहेन धनलोभेन लाभेन मणियोषिताम् ॥  
 आपातरमणायेन चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।  
 दुराशाक्षीरपानेन भोगान्निबलेन च ॥  
 आस्थादानेन चारेण चित्ताहिर्यति पीनताम् ।  
 आगमापायवपुषा विषवैषम्यशंसिता ॥  
 भोगाभोगेन भीमेन चेतो गच्छति पीनताम् ।

<sup>1</sup> संयोजितं परे चित्तं शुद्धं निर्वासनं भवेत् ।  
 ततस्तु कल्पनाशून्यमात्मतां याति राघव ॥  
 मन एव विचारेण मन्ये विलयमेष्यति ।  
 मनोविलयमात्रेण ततः श्रेयो भविष्यति ॥  
 प्रबुद्धानां मनो राम ब्रह्मैवेह हि नेतरत् ॥  
 यदा संक्षीयते चित्तमभावात्यन्तभावनात् ।  
 चित्सामान्यस्वरूपस्य सत्तासामान्यता सदा ॥

properly and methodically. There is a possibility of failure when the right method is not followed. "The mind cannot be controlled without the best method. (V, 92, 34.) Those who do not care for the proper method, and proceed at random are obstinate people (*haṭhāḥ*). They experience one danger after another, and undergo one trouble after another." (V, 92, 40.)<sup>1</sup> The most important thing that one should always bear in mind is that "The mind is dissolved by one's own effort of will. (III, 111, 2.) By no other method,—penances, pilgrimage, learning, sacrifices, and other actions—can the mind be dissolved as by the effort of one's own will." (VIb, 163, 8.)<sup>2</sup> Some of the methods suggested by Vasiṣṭha, which we shall learn one by one in detail, are: (a) Realization of its unreality through philosophical thinking; (b) negation of imagination or willing (*samkalpac-cheda*); (c) distaste for objects of pleasure; (d) renunciation of desire; (e) eradication of egoistic tendency; (f) practice in detachment (*asaṅga-bhyāsa*); (g) attainment of equanimity; (h) freedom from the idea of being an agent; (i) mental renunciation of everything; and (j) intense concentration on the Reality.

(a) *The annihilation of the mind through realizing its unreality* with the help of the Absolutist Metaphysics: "The giving up of the ego (the mind) is easier than

<sup>1</sup> न शक्यते मनो जेतुं विना युक्तिमनिन्दताम् ॥  
साधयन्ति समुत्सृज्य युक्तिं ये तान्हठान्विदुः ।  
भयाद्भयमुपायान्ति क्लेशात्क्लेशं व्रजन्ति ते ॥

<sup>2</sup> स्वेनैव पौरुषेणागु स्वसंवेदनरूपिणा ।  
यत्नेन चित्तवेतालस्यक्तवेष्टं वस्तु जीयते ॥  
स्वसंविद्यत्तसंरोधाद्यथा चेतः प्रशाम्यति ।  
न तथाऽङ्ग तपस्तीर्थविद्यायज्ञक्रियागणैः ॥

the opening of the eyes, or the crushing of a flower. There is hardly any difficulty in it. (VIa, 111, 31.) A thing which is taken to be real on account of ignorance will no longer be apprehended as such when true knowledge is attained. It will vanish. (VIa, 111, 32.) The ego (the mind) is only an illusory conception in the Absolute like the appearance of a snake in a rope and of water in a desert. (VIa, 111, 34.) *Mananam* (mentation) is unreality from the point of view of the Self, so it does not really belong to me. I am not the mind. The negation of the mind is thus the realization of the eternal Brahman." (IV, 11, 27.)<sup>1</sup>

(b) *Negation of saṃkalpa* (will, imagination): "Imagination is the bondage of the mind, and its absence is Liberation. (VIb, 1, 27.) The mind is dissolved when there is no imagination. Then Liberation is realized. (V, 13, 80.) The illusory world has arisen on account of imagination alone, and when imagining is stopped completely, it vanishes away. (VIa, 33, 42.) The sufferings of the world are rooted out the time when imagining has come to an end." (IV, 54, 19.)<sup>2</sup> How

<sup>1</sup> अपि पुण्यादलनादपि लोचनमीलनात् ।  
सुकरोऽहंकृतेस्स्यागो न क्लेशोऽत्र मनागपि ॥  
अज्ञानमात्रसंसिद्धं वस्तु ज्ञानेन नश्यति ।  
यथा रज्ज्वां भुजङ्गत्वं मरावम्बुमतिर्यथा ।  
मिथ्यावभासः स्फुरति तथा मिथ्याऽऽहंकृतिः ॥  
मननं कृत्रिमं रूपं ममैतन्न यतोऽस्म्यहम् ।  
इति तत्त्यागतः शान्तं चेतो ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥

<sup>2</sup> संकल्पनं मनोबन्धस्तदभावो विमुक्तता ।  
अचित्तत्वमसंकल्पान्मोक्षस्तेनाभिजायते ॥  
संकल्पमात्रमेवेदं जगन्मिथ्यात्वमुत्थितम् ।  
असंकल्पनमात्रेण ब्रह्मन्कापि विलीयते ॥



then to stop the imagining activity which creates this world? "What difficulty is there in putting an end to the imagining activity? Destroy *samkalpa* with the help of *samkalpa*, the mind with the help of the mind, and stay in the Self. (IV, 54, 18.) *Samkalpa* comes to an end through the negation of what is affirmed. (IV, 54, 13.) Through *bhāva-viparyaya* (opposite idea) the effect of creative imagination can be marred very easily. (IV, 54, 16.) To will to be something is *samkalpa* according to those who know the nature of *samkalpa*; to realize the unreality of this idea is to kill *samkalpa*." (VIb, 1, 3.)<sup>1</sup> The idea underlying these passages is that when something is imagined by the mind, it is created in the objective world, and the imaginer is bound to have it. To get rid of it, one must send an opposite current of imagining activity out negating the previous affirmation. Both the positive and negative ideas will neutralize each other and will leave the Absolute Self shining in Its own glory in the experience of the individual, which is no more the individual. The affirmation (*bhāvanā*) of some objective thing, which is actually brought into existence in the

उपशान्ते हि संकल्प उपशान्तमिदं भवेत् ।

संसारदुःखमखिलं मूलादपि महामते ॥

<sup>1</sup> संकल्पेनैव संकल्पं मनसा स्वमनो मुने ।

छित्त्वा स्वात्मनि तिष्ठ त्वं किमेतावति दुष्करम् ॥

भावनाभावमात्रेण संकल्पः क्षीयते स्वयम् ।

संकल्पनाशयत्नेन न भयान्यनुगच्छति ॥

संकल्पो येन हन्तव्यस्तेन भावविपर्ययात् ।

अप्यर्धेन निमेषेण लील्यैव निहन्यते ॥

अहंभावनमेवाहुः कल्पनं कल्पनाविदः ।

नभोर्यभावनां तस्य संकल्पत्याग उच्यते ॥

subtle world the very moment it is affirmed, is the current of the creative *samkalpa* that binds, and the negation, denial or mentally giving up of it, which actually brings the thing to an end, is the opposite current of creative imagination that liberates. This process, in fact, underlies the evolution and involution of world-experience in the Absolute, which as such does not experience them as both the currents neutralize each other. Bhagavān-Dās similarly says: "Assertion by it (the Absolute) and in it gives existence to the *An-ātma*, the Not-Self; rejection and denial by it and within it imposes non-existence on the same *An-ātma*. It sayeth: 'I (am) This'; and the This, the Not-Self is. It sayeth 'I (this) Not-Self (am) not'; and the Not-Self is no more. But it sayeth both things in the same breath, simultaneously. What is the result? The endless process that is ever coming into being and vanishing out of being into nothing." (Bhagavān-Dās: *The Science of Peace*, Second Ed., p. 109.) As according to Vasiṣṭha so according to Gauḍa-pāda also, "The mind ceases to be mind when it ceases from imagining, by the knowledge of the truth. . . ." (*Māṇḍūkya-kārikas*, III, 32.)

(c) *Distaste for the objects of enjoyment*: Our bondage is to a great extent constituted and prolonged by our fascination for the so-called pleasures of the world. Our mind runs after them and goes on imagining for itself such occasions and situations when it might be in contact with this or that object of pleasure, with the result that we always have an objective world before us as a consequence of the creative imagination of the mind. To be free from this state of affairs, we must begin to cultivate distaste and indifference for the objects of pleasure. So Vasiṣṭha

says: "Desire for the objects of pleasure is bondage; giving it up is Liberation. (IV, 35, 3.) A man is liberated in proportion to his indifference to the world. (III, 61, 35.) As long as indifference for pleasures is not generated in the mind, so long the complete Liberation does not accrue. (V, 24, 37-38.) The inhabitants of the forest of this world undergo pains and sufferings until they are not indifferent to pleasures." (V, 24, 22.)<sup>1</sup> Dr. Prell similarly says: "The higher powers of the soul rise in proportion as the life of the sense is depressed." (*Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. II, p. 171.) How then to acquire indifference for the pleasures of the world? The simple answer that can be given is: Think over their illusory and mixed nature. Think that every pleasure has within itself hidden its opposite pain. Think that even those who have the pleasures for which you hanker, are in no way happier than you. Think that the pleasures for which you aspired in the past and which you got eventually have not made you happy. All such considerations constitute *vicāra* (thinking) on the nature of pleasures. The second answer given by Vasiṣṭha is: Know thy-Self. When you have found what you really are, you will learn that your own Self is the ultimate source of all happiness which you are seeking in vain in the objects of pleasure. Thus says he: "Dislike for the objects of

<sup>1</sup> भोगेच्छामात्रको बन्धस्तस्यागो मोक्ष उच्यते ॥

यतो यतो विरज्यते ततस्ततो विमुच्यते ॥

न भोगेष्वरतिर्वावज्जायते भवनाशिनी ॥

न परा निर्वृत्तिस्तावत्प्राप्यते जयदायिनी ॥

तावद्भ्रमन्ति दुःखेषु संसारादविवासिनः ।

विरतिं विषयेष्वेते यावन्नायान्ति देहिनः ॥



pleasure arises from thinking (*vicāra*) on their nature. (V, 24, 62.) See that all that is pleasant is like poison and fire. (IV, 35, 4.) Thinking creates distaste for the pleasures, and distaste for the pleasures makes one more capable to think. (V, 24, 62.) Indifference to pleasures becomes deeply rooted in the heart by having a vision of the Self, (*Ātmavalōkana*). (V, 24, 53.) The vision of the Absolute brings about desirelessness, and desirelessness brings about the vision of the Absolute." (V, 24, 54.)<sup>1</sup> We should also remember that indifference to pleasures is not magically effected completely in a moment. We have to strive, and to make continued efforts to attain it fully. "Distaste for pleasures is established only gradually as a creeper grows when watered and manured. (V, 24, 20.) One should (therefore) put in his best efforts in acquiring distaste for the pleasures of the world." (V, 24, 37.)<sup>2</sup>

In this connection we may also note Vasiṣṭha's secret of obtaining control over the sense-organs with which pleasures are enjoyed. It is an absurd attempt, according to him, to control an organ directly. All

<sup>1</sup> विचाराद्भोगार्हणम् ।

यद्यत्स्वाद्विह तत्सर्वं दृश्यतां विषयवद्विवत् ॥

विचारो भोगमार्हातो विचाराद्भोगार्हणम् ॥

आत्मावलोकनेनैषा विषयारतिरुत्तमा ।

हृदये स्थितिमायाति श्रीरिवाम्भोजकोटरे ॥

परदृष्टी वितृष्यात्वं तृष्णाभावे च दृक्परा ।

एते मिथः स्थिते दृष्टी तेजोदीपदशे यथा ॥

<sup>2</sup> क्रमादभ्यस्यमानैषा विषयारतिरात्मज ।

सर्वतः स्फुटतामेति सेकसिक्ता लता यथा ॥

परं पौरुषमाश्रित्य भोगेष्वरतिमाहरेत् ॥

sense-organs (*indriyas*) are directed and controlled by the mind. The best way to have the organs under one's control is to establish control of the mind, the root of all sense-organs. "What the mind gives its consent to, is instantaneously accomplished by the senses, as the ministers obey the orders of the king. (III, 114, 47.) The mind is the leader of the army of the senses. Victory over the former is the victory over the latter." (VIb, 163, 6.)<sup>1</sup>

(d) *Renunciation of desires (vāsana-tyāga)*: Renunciation of desires is a very important requirement for annihilating or dissolving the mind for the attainment of Liberation. It is desire that really binds us to any object, to any kind of the objective world. The world around, the environment in which we are placed, the people by whom we are surrounded, the family in which we are born, the bodies that we are associated with, and the powers that we have,—all are the results of our desires. We are being tossed up and down in the ocean of the world; we wander here and there; live this life or that, simply as dragged by our desires. All our desires are omnipotent in so far as they are fructified. But when are they fructified? Generally when we have shifted our desire from the object which we no longer desire. But we must have what we formerly desired, no matter whether we would like to have it or not. This is the bondage of desire. This is what pains one—not to get what is desired then and there, and to get it when it is no longer the object of desire.

<sup>1</sup> मनो यदनुसंधत्ते तत्सर्वेन्द्रियवृत्तयः ।

क्षणात्संपादयन्त्येता राजाज्ञामिव मन्त्रिणः ॥

चित्तमिन्द्रियसेनाया नायकं तज्जयाज्जयः ।

Moreover, every desire when it is cherished gives a promise of the happiness of its fulfilment, but when it is nearing its fulfilment, or is being fulfilled, the promised happiness quickly and imperceptibly shifts its centre to the object of a new desire. This tantalizing process goes on endlessly. This fact makes us wander through the *samsāra*, without ever coming to rest or peace. This is why Indian philosophers, from the time of the *Upaniṣads*, have always emphasized the renunciation of desires as a very essential condition of obtaining Liberation. "When all the desires that dwelt in the heart are forsaken, the mortal becomes immortal, and reaches the Eternal." (*The Kāṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 6, 14.) It is so, simply because when we cease to desire anything finite, we gradually become free from experiencing them as the contents of our world. The individuality itself is constituted by a shell of desires within the Absolute Experience. Breaking the shell of desires (which is the same as annihilation of the mind, for the mind is a tendency to desire and to imagine the object of desire hypostatized) is allowing the individual to partake of the limitless Absolute Experience. It is like the breaking of a bubble, which now is no longer a bubble but the ocean. In fact, between ourselves and the Infinite Brahman, the desire for something finite is the only barrier. No wonder, therefore, that Vasiṣṭha repeatedly urges his hearers to give up desire (*vāsanā*). Here we shall note in brief what he has said in this connection:

"Desire is the essential nature of the mind. The mind and desire are synonyms. (VIa, 94, 5.) The idea within oneself "may this be mine" is the great chain that binds one. (V, 17, 7.) The great-minded ones reach the Absolute by giving up this idea with regard to all



objects, positive or negative. (V, 17, 8.) The mind with no desire is the Reality which is called pure Consciousness. (IV, 17, 3.) The experience of a living man from which desires are totally absent is called *jivan-mukti* (Liberation in life). It is an experience which the unliberated ones cannot understand or know." (III, 22, 8.)<sup>1</sup>

How then to be free from desire? The first thing required to free oneself from desire is to be convinced that it is an evil which must be warded off. One should realize how helpless desires make us, how strongly they take hold upon us, and how all our troubles and sufferings have their source in desire. "It is the perennial source of all pains of old age and death, of mental worries and physical diseases. (I, 17, 39.) All the evils of the evils and defects manifest themselves in the sky of the heart at the dark night of desire. (I, 17, 1.) The person struck by desires appears helpless to all, loses his soul, loses his lustre, and is reduced to wretchedness. He is deluded, he cries in agony, and he falls in the scale of life. (V, 15, 10.) As a man grows old, his hair grows old, his teeth grow old; in fact everything of the old man grows

<sup>1</sup> वासनेव महाराज स्वरूपं विद्धि चेतसः ।

चित्तशब्दस्तु पर्यायो वासनाया उदाहृतः ॥

इदमस्तु ममेत्यन्तर्वैषा राघव भावना ।

तां तृण्यां शृङ्खलां विद्धि कलनां च महामते ॥

तामेतां सर्वभावेषु सत्स्वसत्सु च सर्वदा ।

संयज्य परमोदारः परमेति महामनाः ॥

सर्वैषणानां संशान्तौ शुद्धचित्तस्य या स्थितिः ।

तत्सत्यमुच्यते सैषा विमला चिदुदाहृता ॥

अमुक्तैरपरिज्ञाता सा जीवन्मुक्तोच्यते ॥

old and wears out. But desire alone does not wear out (*i.e.*, continues to trouble the old man with the same power or probably more powerfully)." (VIb, 93, 86.)<sup>1</sup> One should also be convinced of the fact that really speaking there is no object in the world so exclusively good, pleasant or beautiful as may be worth desiring. There is also no object in the world so exclusively evil, painful or ugly as worth our aversion (desire to get rid of something) or *heya* (worth discarding). There is nothing *upadeya* (worth obtaining) or *heya* in the world, because from the ultimate point of view of the Self, there is nothing real. "The whole world (as such) being totally unreal, there is nothing in it so desirable as a wise man should hanker after it. (IV, 45, 42.) And everything being ultimately the Brahman, there is nothing which is to be avoided by a wise man." (IV, 45, 43.)<sup>2</sup> There is no real loss or gain in our inability to get a thing, or in our getting it. There is really no loss or gain in the decrease or

<sup>1</sup> जरामरणदुःखानामेका रत्नसमुद्रिका ।  
 आधिव्याधिविलासानां नित्यं मत्ता विलासिनी ॥  
 ह्यार्दान्धकारशर्वयां तृष्णयेह दुरन्तया ।  
 स्फुरन्ति चेतनाकाशे दोषकौशिकपङ्क्तयः ॥  
 दृष्टदैन्यो हतस्वान्तो हतौजा याति नीचताम् ।  
 मुह्यते रीति पतति तृष्णयाऽभिहतो जनः ॥  
 जीर्यन्ते जीर्यतः केशा दन्ता जीर्यन्ति जीर्यतः ।  
 क्षीयते जीर्यते सर्वं तृष्णैवैका न जीर्यते ॥

<sup>2</sup> सर्वत्रासत्यभूतेऽस्मिन्प्रपञ्चैकान्तकारिणि ।  
 संसारे किमुपादेयं प्राज्ञो यदभिवाञ्छतु ॥  
 सर्वत्र सत्यभूतेऽस्मिन्ब्रह्मतत्त्वमयेऽपि च ।  
 किं स्यात्त्रिभुवने हेयं प्राज्ञाः परिहरन्तु यत् ॥

destruction, or increase or manifestation of the world to the real Self. "What real loss or gain is there, if the world of fancy of some mind is destroyed or multiplied in its contents?" (IV, 45, 35.)<sup>1</sup> It is the idea of some value in objects that is the seed of desire. The very moment we are convinced that the objects of our desire or aversion can neither do us any ultimate good nor harm, we shall cease to desire or hate them. Another very important fact that we should remember in connection with the renunciation of desire is that the renunciation of desire cannot be successfully effected by the negative method of suppression merely. No idea or desire can actually be suppressed without substitution of another in its place. It can only be eradicated by having an opposite idea in the field of consciousness, and by giving the latter our full support. The best remedy for getting rid of desire is first to oppose good desires to the bad ones; then to plant in the heart better and nobler ones in place of the previous good ones; and then the best and noblest ones in place of the previous better and nobler ones. This process should go on until the desire embraces the Infinite Good. As absolute motion is rest, so also the Absolute-desire is really no desire. It is to be ever in peace with the Absolute. The small shell of our desires that constitutes our individuality thus goes on spreading and expanding more and more all round, until it embraces the dimension of the Absolute Experience, and ceases to be an individual shell. It is like the enlargement of a bubble into the ocean. Thus says Vasiṣṭha: "First give up the dark desires connected

<sup>1</sup> मनःप्रकल्पिते भोगे इति विस्तीर्णपत्तने ।

वृद्धिं चोपगते वृद्धिं किं वृद्धं कस्य किं क्षतम् ॥



with sensual pleasures, and supplant them by pure desires of befriending, etc. (doing good to others, etc.). Acting in accordance with the actualization of the pure desires, freeing from them within, one should have a desire to obtain the vision of Consciousness. Then give this desire also up, with the help of which the other desires have been got rid of, for, it involves the idea of the mind and intellect, beyond which now you should fix yourself with your fullest concentration. Give up the idea of your being a desirer and of there being any object of desire for you, with the help of the idea that you are one with Consciousness (*Cin-maya*); that you are already what you would become (by desiring)." (IV, 57, 19-24.)<sup>1</sup>

Giving up action is not to be misunderstood as renunciation of desire. Vasiṣṭha does not urge upon our being physically inactive. It is immaterial for a man who is free from desires whether he does some thing or does not do anything. "He whose mind is desireless

<sup>1</sup> वासनास्त्वं परित्यज्य मोक्षार्थित्वमपि त्यज ॥  
 तामसीर्वासनाः पूर्वं त्यक्त्वा विषयवासिताः ।  
 मैत्र्यादिभावनानाम्नीं गृहाणामलवासनाम् ॥  
 तामप्यन्तः परित्यज्य ताभिर्व्यवहरन्नपि ।  
 अन्तःशान्तसमस्तेहो भव चिन्मात्रवासनः ॥  
 तामप्यथ परित्यज्य मनोबुद्धिसमन्विताम् ।  
 शेषे स्थिरसमाधानो येन त्यजसि तत्त्यज ॥  
 चिन्मयः कलनाकालप्रकाशतिमिरादिकम् ।  
 वासनां वासितारं च प्राणस्पन्दनपूर्वकम् ॥  
 समूलमपि संत्यज्य व्योमसौम्यप्रशान्तधीः ।  
 यस्त्वं भवसि सद्बुद्धे स भवानस्तु सत्कृतः ॥

has nothing to do with activity or inactivity." (IV, 57, 26.)<sup>1</sup> He distinguishes, therefore, two kinds of renunciation of desire; one is the renunciation in spite of which a man lives in the world and is sportfully engaged in all the activities of life; the other, in which the individuality is totally merged into the Absolute. The first kind of renunciation is called the *dhyeya-tyāga*, and the second, the *jñeya-tyāga*. (V, 16, 6.)<sup>2</sup> They are distinguished as follows: "The renunciation of desires for objects which arises as a result of our conviction, acquired after thoughtful consideration that "I have nothing to do with the objects, nor have they anything to do with me" in opposition to the previous conviction that "the objects are my life and I live in the objects, and cannot in any way exist without them," accompanied by all sorts of activity sportfully performed, is called *dhyeya*-renunciation. It is giving up of the egoistic desires for the objects, yet keeping sportful engagement in life. It is the life of a liberated man." (V, 16, 7-9, 11.)<sup>3</sup> "The

<sup>1</sup> समाधिमथ कर्माणि मा करोतु करोतु वा ।

हृदयेनास्तसर्वास्थो मुक्त एवोत्तमाशयः ॥

सर्वत्र वासनात्यागो राम राजीवलोचन ।

द्विविधः कथ्यते तज्ज्ञैर्ज्ञेयो ध्येयश्च मानद ॥

<sup>2</sup> अहमेषां पदार्थानामेते च मम जीवितम् ।

नाहमेभिर्विना कश्चिन्न मयैते विना किल ॥

इत्यन्तर्निश्चयं कृत्वा विचार्य मनसा सह ।

नाहं पदार्थस्य न मे पदार्थ इति भाविते ॥

अन्तः शीतलया बुद्ध्या कुर्वत्या लीलया क्रियाम् ।

यो नूनं वासनात्यागो ध्येयो राम स कीर्तितः ॥

अहंकारमयीं त्यक्त्वा वासनां लीलयेव यः ।

तिष्ठति ध्येयसंत्यागी जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

renunciation called *jñeya-tyāga* is that when a liberated man, having given up all desires and having become even to everything, cuts entirely the roots of individuality and thus gives up the physical body." (V, 16, 10, 12.)<sup>1</sup>

(e) *Eradication of the egoistic feeling (individuality)*: It is our limitation in and identification with some particular aspect of the Infinite that constitutes our individuality. The very moment we affirm ourself to be something, we hypostatize ourselves to be individuals, and commence to live a life of isolation and suffering. Assertion or affirmation of the self to be something is the commencement of the worldly career, for in the very moment we affirm ourselves to be something, the other aspects of the Absolute Whole are denied of the Self and are relegated to the sphere of the not-self. But the Whole as such never being separated into parts, there arises in us desire for the not-self, giving rise to the series of innumerable lives and deaths, which will continue until we realize our being the Whole instead of only a part of It. Ego or self-affirmation (*aham-bhāva*), is therefore to be completely got rid of to be liberated. "The tree of the mind has its seed in self-affirmation, and its branches, leaves and flowers are the objects of the world. Root the whole tree out and destroy its seed. (VIa, 94, 13.) The ever changing delusion of the world follows self-affirmation (VIb, 26, 29.) Of this world-illusion, unreal

<sup>1</sup> सर्वं समतया बुद्ध्वा यं कृत्वा वासनाक्षयम् ।

जहाति निर्ममो देहं ज्ञेयोऽसौ वासनाक्षयः ॥

निर्मूलकलनां त्यक्त्वा वासनां यः शमं गतः ।

ज्ञेयत्यागमयं विद्धि मुक्तं तं रघुनन्दन ॥



as a sky-flower, self-affirmation is the root. (Vib, 15, 2.) When the seed is burnt with the fire of knowledge, the tree of world-experience does not grow. (Vib, 8, 2.) The sun of Self-realization is fully seen only when the cloud of ego is dispersed. (V, 13, 17.) The lotus of Self-realization does not bloom as long as the moonlight of the Absolute Vision remained hidden by the cloud of the ego." (IV, 33, 28.)<sup>1</sup> [Kingsland similarly says: "The individual self must be *lost* before the Self can be found, not lost *qua* individual, but lost as being *nothing but* individual." (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 422.) "All mystical teachers have taught that it is only in proportion as the self—the lower personal self—is lost, that the real Self can be found." (*Ibid.*, p. 241.) ]

How then to be free from the ego? How to cease from self-affirmation in particular aspects of the Absolute? Vasiṣṭha says that self-affirmation would die a natural death when we come to know through philosophical reflection that it is unreal from the Absolute point of view; when one becomes convinced

<sup>1</sup> अहंवीजश्चित्तवृक्षः सशाखाफलपल्लवः ।

उन्मूल्य समूलं तमाकाशहृदयो भव ॥

अहंत्वोल्लेखतः सत्ता भ्रमभावविकारिणी ।

तदभावात्स्वभावैकनिष्ठता शमशालिनी ॥

भ्रमस्य जागतस्यास्य जातस्याकाशवर्णवत् ।

अहंभावोऽभिमन्ताऽऽत्मा मूलमाद्यमुदाहृतम् ॥

ईदृशोऽयं जगद्वृक्षो जायतेऽहंत्ववीजतः ।

बीजे ज्ञानाग्निनिर्गमे नैव किञ्चन जायते ॥

अहंकाराम्बुदे क्षीणे चिद्वयोन्नि विमले तते ।

नूनं संप्रौढतामेति स्वालोको भास्करः परः ॥

चिज्ज्योत्स्ना यावदेवान्तरहंकारघनावृता ।

विकासयति नो तावत्परमार्थकुमुद्वतीम् ॥

that one is in fact the Whole Reality including even that which is denied by our act of affirmation of a part. The affirmation of one's being the Absolute Whole will in course of time negate the affirmation of his being a part only. Or, the very moment one affirms himself to be something, he should also affirm that he is also the other which is denied. "When the nature of the ego is known, it will vanish. (VIb, 8, 3.) The ego will not grow if affirmation is made in the Self which is the pure Consciousness. (IV, 33, 43.) If one realizes that the objective world is illusory, and that one has really nothing to do with love or hate (for any object), the ego will not grow. (IV, 33, 44.) If with the idea, "I am the whole world", all conceptions of the desirable or the undesirable are dropped, and the universality of interest is acquired, the egoistic tendency does not grow." (IV, 33, 46.)<sup>1</sup>

*Realization of Cosmic Consciousness* is also another way of getting rid of the individual ego. Vasiṣṭha has given us the method of realizing the Cosmic Consciousness in the following passages: "Let a man who is already peaceful, self-controlled, free from immoral and selfish conduct, above sensual pleasures, and endowed

<sup>1</sup> प्रेक्षमाणं च तस्मास्ति किलाहंत्वं कदाचन ।

एतावदेव तज्ज्ञानमनेनैव प्रदह्यते ॥

चिन्मात्रदर्पणाकारे निर्मले स्वात्मनि स्थिते ।

इति भावानुसंधानादहंकारो न जायते ॥

मिथ्येयमिन्द्रजालश्रीः किं मे ज्ञेहविरागयोः ।

इत्यन्तरानुसंधानादहंकारो न जायते ॥

अहं हि जगदित्यन्तर्होयादेयदृशोः श्रूये ।

समतायां प्रसन्नायां नाहंभावः प्रवर्धते ॥

with faith, occupy a soft seat, controlling his mind, let him utter aloud the syllable *Om* as long as he likes. He should then perform a few *prāṇāyāmas* (exercises in breath-control) to purify his mind. Let him, then, gradually withdraw his senses from their respective objects. He should now dissolve the ideas of his body, senses, mind, and individuality into the respective Cosmic Elements from which they arose. He should (for example) dissolve the idea of the earthly part of his body in the Earth, watery part in the Water, fiery into the Fire, and airy into the Air, and the etheric into the Ether. In the same way the organs also should be merged in their respective sources. The ears should be merged in the Directions, skin in the Lightning, eyes in the Sun, the tongue in the Water, the feet in Viṣṇu, the anus in Mitra, the generative organ in Kaśyapa, the mind in the Moon, the intellect in Brahmā. These are the causal gods. Having merged and dissolved (in thought) his personality in the Cosmic Personality, let him now feel that he is the Cosmos. Now, let him merge the Earth in Water; Water in Fire; Fire in Air; Air in Ether; and Ether in the Great Ether, which is the source of all things in the world. Let him now realize that he is the *Cosmic Subtle Body*. Let him now merge the Subtle Body in the Unmanifested and Undifferentiated Objectivity, in which the whole world exists without name and form, and which is spoken of as *Prakṛti* by some, as *Māyā* by others, and *Avidyā* (Void) by those whose minds are confused by their logic (Buddhists probably). Having merged everything therein, let him feel that he is the *Avyakta*, the Unmanifested *Source* of the entire Universe. There is a *fourth* condition of existence (the Absolute Brahman) which is the inexhaustible source of



all these. To experience that, let him meditate on It and merge himself into it." (Summary translation of VIa, 128, 1-25.)<sup>1</sup> It will not be difficult to grasp the

१ शान्तो दान्तश्चोपरतो निषिद्धात्काम्यकर्मणः ।  
 विषयेन्द्रियसंश्लेषसुखाच्च श्रद्धयाऽन्वितः ॥  
 मृदासने समासीनो जितचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।  
 ओमित्युच्चारयेत्तावन्मनो यावत्प्रसीदति ॥  
 प्राणायामं ततः कुर्यादन्तःकरणशुद्धये ।  
 इन्द्रियाण्याहरेत्पश्चाद्विषयेभ्यः शनैः शनैः ॥  
 देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिक्षेत्रज्ञानां च संभवः ।  
 यस्माद्भवति तज्ज्ञात्वा तेषु पश्चाद्विलापयेत् ॥  
 विराजि प्रथमं स्थित्वा तत्रात्मनि ततः परम् ।  
 अव्याकृते स्थितः पश्चात्स्थितः परमकारणे ॥  
 मांसादि पार्थिवं भागं पृथिव्यां प्रविलापयेत् ।  
 आप्यं रक्तादिकं चाप्सु तैजसं तेजसि क्षिपेत् ॥  
 वायव्यं च महावायौ नाभसं नभसि क्षिपेत् ।  
 पृथिव्यादिषु विन्यस्य चेन्द्रियाण्यात्मयोनिषु ॥  
 दिक्षु न्यस्यात्मनः श्रोत्रं त्वचं विद्युति निक्षिपेत् ॥  
 चक्षुरादित्यविम्बे च जिह्वामप्सु विनिक्षिपेत् ।  
 प्राणं वायौ वाचमग्नौ पाणिमिन्द्रे विनिक्षिपेत् ॥  
 विष्णौ तथाऽऽत्मनः पादौ पायुं मित्रे तथैव च ।  
 उपस्थं कश्यपे न्यस्य मनश्चन्द्रे निवेशयेत् ॥  
 बुद्धिं ब्रह्मणि संयच्छेदेताः कारणदेवताः ।  
 एवं न्यस्यात्मनो देहं विराडस्मीति चिन्तयेत् ॥  
 ब्रह्माण्डान्तः स्थितो योऽसावर्धनारीश्वरः प्रभुः ।  
 आधारः सर्वभूतानां कारणं तद्गुदाहृतम् ॥  
 स यज्ञसृष्टिरूपोऽसौ जगद्वृत्तौ व्यवस्थितः ।  
 क्षितिं चाप्सु समावेश्य सलिलं चानले क्षिपेत् ॥  
 अग्निं वायौ समावेश्य वायुं च नभसि क्षिपेत् ।

idea of the possibility of realizing the Cosmic Consciousness, when we remember that according to Vasiṣṭha an individual, on whatever plane of manifestation he may feel his being, is a differentiation or mode of the Whole with which he is ever identical, though he does not realize the fact of his identity with the Cosmic Whole. The reason why he does not recognize it is that he is too much occupied in his thought with only a portion of the Whole, which he calls his body. Now, if his thought could be liberated from that particular form and be directed to the whole, he will begin to feel that the whole, and not any part of the whole, is his body. Another principle that underlies the above description of the process of realization of Cosmic Consciousness is that our bodies are sustained only by our

नमश्च महदाकाशे समस्तोत्पत्तिकारणे ॥  
 स्थित्वा तस्मिन्क्षणं योगी लिङ्गमात्रशरीरधृक् ।  
 वासना भूतसूक्ष्माश्च कर्माविद्ये तथैव च ॥  
 दशेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिरेतल्लिङ्गं विदुर्बुधाः ।  
 ततोऽर्धोऽण्डाद्वह्निर्यातस्तत्रात्माऽस्मीति चिन्तयेत् ॥  
 चतुर्मुखोऽग्रे चार्यं मृतसूक्ष्मव्यवस्थितः ।  
 लिङ्गमव्याकृते सूक्ष्मे न्यस्याव्यक्ते च बुद्धिमान् ॥  
 नामरूपविनिर्मुक्तं यस्मिन्संतिष्ठते जगत् ।  
 तामाहुः पकृतिं केचिन्मायामेके परे त्वणून् ॥  
 अविद्यामपरे प्रादुस्तर्कविभ्रान्तचेतसः ।  
 तत्र सर्वे लयं गत्वा तिष्ठन्त्यव्यक्तरूपिणः ॥  
 निःसंभन्वा निरास्वादाः संभवन्ति ततः पुनः ।  
 तत्स्वरूपा हि तिष्ठन्ति यावत्सृष्टिः प्रवर्तते ॥  
 आनुलोम्यात्स्मृता सृष्टिः प्रातिलोम्येन संहतिः ।  
 अतः स्थानत्रयं त्यक्त्वा तुरीयं पदमव्ययम् ॥  
 ध्यायेत्तत्प्राप्तये लिङ्गं प्रविलाप्य परं विशेत् ॥

thought or idea of them, by our interest in them, and by our feeling that they are real. If we could succeed in total withdrawal of our thoughts, feelings and interests from them, they will no longer be felt to be a part, or an item, or a content of our consciousness, as it happens in temporary forgetfulness, in dream, in sleep, in hypnotic trance, and in the phenomena of alteration of personality. Our interests and purposes, our belief and faith, our particular points of view, limit our consciousness which can be expanded to any dimension by expanding them. A modern writer, it is interesting to note in this connection, says: "It is not difficult in the light of the present day beliefs, to pass in thought from the visible universe to its indwelling material Substance-principle; and to do this helps us to pass in turn from that garment of the Spirit of God to that which it clothes and expresses, namely, Infinite Life and Intelligence itself." (Charles Wase: *The Inner Teaching and Yoga*, p. 25.) To do this, "In thought, the material universe must be resolved into the ether, and the ether resolved into Spirit—life, will, mind—into God—before man realizes his own birth-right, and his powers in unity with that living power, from which, and in which, he really derives his being. (*Ibid.*, p. 21.) . . . This is the process of Involution, and this path consciously taken, brings you the Divine powers of a new and regenerated Consciousness." (*Ibid.*, p. 26.)

Transcending the ego or individuality means universalization of personality. When it is effected, the character of the man becomes changed. He becomes an embodiment of the moral laws. Virtues originate in his personality as rivers from mountains. He is no more under the sway of temptations or under the



control of passions and sense-organs. "When the mind, which itself is called the ego, is annihilated or is being annihilated, the evil qualities of avarice, delusion, etc., do not touch one as water does not touch a lotus (VIa, 116, 1-2); cheerfulness always brightens his face (VIa, 116, 3); knots of desires are cut off and fall gradually one after another. (VIa, 116, 4); anger becomes thin; delusion less dense; passion becomes powerless, and avarice runs away. The sense-organs do not go out of control, and sorrow never visits one. (VIa, 116, 5.) Pleasures and pains are no longer experienced. All round peace and equanimity are then felt." (VIa, 116, 6.)<sup>1</sup>

(f) *The practice of detachment (asaṅgabhyāsa)*: Attachment to the objects of our experience, to actions and to bodies, is the bond that never allows the mind to be liberated from finitude and particularity. One should therefore try to get rid of attachment, if one wants to be liberated from limitations. "The essence of the seed of the sprout of the world-experience, which

<sup>1</sup> गलिते वा गलद्रूपे चित्तेऽहंकारनामानि ।  
 बलादपि हि संजाता न लिम्पन्त्याशयं सितम् ।  
 लोभमोहादयो दोषाः पर्यासीव सरोरुहम् ॥  
 मुदिताद्याः श्रियो वक्त्रं न मुञ्चन्ति कदाचन ।  
 गलत्यहंकारमये चित्ते गलति दुष्कृते ॥  
 वासनाप्रत्ययविक्षिप्ता इव त्रुट्यन्त्यलं शनैः ।  
 कोपस्तानवमायाति मोहो मान्द्यं हि गच्छति ॥  
 कामः क्लमं गच्छति च लोभः कापि पलायते ।  
 नोह्यसन्तीन्द्रियाण्युच्चैः खेदः स्फुरति नोच्चकैः ॥  
 न दुःखान्युपवृंहन्ति न वलगन्ति सुखानि च ।  
 सर्वत्र समतोदेति हृदि शैत्यप्रदायिनी ॥

is desire, can be destroyed with the fire of non-attachment. (VIb, 28, 23.) He, who has attachment within him, is bound in this world, whereas he is free, who is free from attachment. (V, 67, 30.) The mind which is full of attachment is bound even though it may have passed through long penances, and the mind, which is free from attachment, is liberated, no matter if it experiences the world. (V, 63, 33.) The pains of the world touch only the mind that is attached." (V, 68, 47.)<sup>1</sup> Now, first of all, it is necessary that we should detach ourselves from the bodies, with which we feel very much identified. "The relation of identity between the Self and the body is illusory. (V, 67, 24.) The Self feels the pains of the body, because it thinks itself to be the body. It becomes free from the pains of the body, when it gives up that idea. (V, 67, 26.) How can the Self be identified with the body, when the former is Consciousness, eternal, Self-revealed, and free from mutations, and the latter is perishable and impure?" (V, 71, 24.)<sup>2</sup> To free from the attachment

- <sup>1</sup> संवित्तेजन्मबीजस्य योऽन्तःस्थो वासनारसः ।  
 स करोत्यङ्कुरोद्भासं तमसङ्गाग्निना दह ॥  
 अन्तःसंसङ्गवाञ्छन्तुमङ्गः संसारसागरे ।  
 अन्तःसंसक्तिमुक्तस्तु तीर्णः संसारसागरात् ॥  
 असक्तं निर्मलं चित्तं मुक्तं संसार्यपि स्फुटम् ।  
 सक्तं तु दीर्घतपसा युक्तमप्यतिबन्धवत् ॥  
 संसक्तचित्तमायान्ति सर्वा दुःखपरम्पराः ॥  
<sup>2</sup> असत्प्रायो हि संबन्धो यथा सल्लिकाष्ठयोः ।  
 तथैव मिथ्यासंबन्धः शरीरपरमात्मनोः ॥  
 देहभावनयैवात्मा देहदुःखवशे स्थितः ।  
 तस्यागेन ततो मुक्तो भवतीति विदुर्बुधाः ॥  
 चिदात्मा निर्मलो नित्यः स्वावभासो निरामयः ।  
 देहस्त्वन्तित्यो मलवांस्तेन संबध्यते कथम् ॥

with the body, "Let him fix himself in the pure Consciousness and keep his mind quite indifferent." (V, 69, 8.)<sup>1</sup> The unattached man is characterized as follows: "He is said to be unattached, who neither prefers to be idle, nor has he any passion for action. He is indifferent in both, and never minds the results of his actions. (V, 68, 6.) He knows that everything is the Self, and so thinks that nothing is desirable or undesirable. (V, 68, 4.) He gives up action, fruits of actions, etc., only mentally and not physically. (V, 68, 8.) He is not moved to joy or sorrow at existence or non-existence of things. (V, 93, 84.) *Asaṅga* (non-attachment) consists in not merging into actions, good or bad, whether one is doing them or not doing them." (VIb, 28, 24.)<sup>2</sup>

(g) *Samatā* (equanimity): Much of the force of finitizing power of the mind will be averted by cultivating equanimity. For when every state of existence is looked on with an equal eye (*sama-bhāvena*), when

<sup>1</sup> केवलं चिति विभ्रम्य किञ्चिद्वेद्यावलम्बिनि ।

सर्वत्र नीरसमिव तिष्ठत्वात्मरसं मनः ॥

<sup>2</sup> नाभिनन्दति नैव कर्म्यं न कर्मस्वनुषजते ।

सुसमो यः फलत्यागी सोऽसंसक्त इति स्मृतः ॥

सर्वमात्मेदमखिलं किं वाञ्छामि त्यजामि किम् ।

इत्यसङ्गस्थितिं विद्धि जीवन्मुक्ततनुस्थितिम् ॥

सर्वकर्मफलादीनां मनसैव न कर्मणा ।

निपुणं यः परित्यागी सोऽसंसक्त इति स्मृतः ॥

भावभावे पदार्थानां हर्षामर्षविकारता ।

मलिना वासना येषां सा सङ्ग इति कथ्यते ॥

कुर्वतोऽकुर्वतश्चैव मनसा यदमजनम् ।

शुभाशुभेषु कार्येषु तदसङ्गं विदुर्बुधाः ॥



every object is received with equal satisfaction, when every person is regarded equally, one has expanded the shell of his individuality into a personality that no longer is interested in the affairs of a particular body, or of a particular mind, but lives a life of the Self which is equally present in all beings, at all times and in all states and things. We are, therefore, asked by Vasiṣṭha to be equanimous (*sama*), always, under all circumstances, and with regard to all persons. "Give up the idea that something is worthy of attainment and other things are worthy of being shunned. Do not be sorry when you come across the latter, nor be elated with joy when you get things of the former kind. (V, 13, 21.) *Samata* is not attained as long as the distinction of *heya* (avoidable) and *upadeya* (worthy of obtaining) does not drop from consciousness. (V, 13, 23.) He has not yet attained *samata* who still makes a distinction that something is really a thing one wants and the other is not so (V, 13, 24); that something is proper and the other is not; that here is loss, there is gain." (V, 13, 25.)<sup>1</sup> Universal brotherhood, of which we hear so much these days from the Theosophists, is also taught by Vasiṣṭha: "The feeling that 'this is my brother and that is not' is cherished

१ मा खेदं भज हेयेषु नोपादेयपरो भव ।  
 हेयादेयदृशौ त्यक्त्वा शेषस्थः स्वच्छतां व्रज ।  
 हेयोपादेयकलने क्षीणे यावन्न चेतसः ।  
 न तावत्समता भाति साध्रे व्योम्नीव चन्द्रिका ॥  
 अवस्तिवदमिदं वस्तु यस्येति लुप्तं मनः ।  
 तस्मिन्नोदेति समता शखोट इव मञ्जरी ॥  
 युक्तयुक्तैषणा यत्र लाभालाभविलासिनी ।  
 समता स्वच्छता तत्र कुतो वैराग्यमासिनी ॥

only by the petty-minded people. The heart of the magnanimous is open to all." (V, 18, 61.) How can one be said to be a brother and another not, when the same Self is equally present in all? (V, 20, 4.) All classes of creatures, O Rāma, are your brothers. There is none here who is absolutely unrelated with you. (V, 18, 64.) The wise ones become open to all, realizing "There is no place where I am not; there is nothing which is not mine." (V, 18, 62.)<sup>1</sup> Compare what P. Pavri writes: "If there be one Life, one Consciousness in all forms with God immanent in all, then as an inevitable corollary to this supreme truth comes the fact of the solidarity of all that lives, of all that is—a Universal Brotherhood." (P. Pavri: *Theosophy Explained*, p. 4.) *Samatā* is not without its reward. The joy that a man of *samatā* feels is unique and immeasurable. "The happiness that is experienced by a *sama*-mind cannot be experienced even in ruling over an empire, nor in enjoying the company of one's beloved. (Vib, 198, 10.) *Samatā* is the end of all opposite feelings (pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, etc.), the cure of all fretting, and the cooler of all heat of sufferings. (Vib, 198, 11.) The men of *samatā*

<sup>1</sup> अयं बन्धुर्यं नेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् ।

उदारचरितानां तु विगतावरणैव धीः ॥

एकत्वे विश्रमानस्य सर्वगत्य किलात्मनः ।

अयं बन्धुः परश्चायमित्यसौ कलना कुतः ॥

सर्वा एव हि ते भूतजातयो राम बन्धवः ।

अत्यन्तासंयुता एतास्तव राम न काश्चन ॥

न तदस्ति न यत्राहं न तदस्ति न यन्मम ।

इति निर्णयि धीराणां विगतावरणैव धीः ॥

never feel despondent even in terrible, continued and serious troubles." (Vib, 198, 27.)<sup>1</sup>

(h) *Freedom from the idea of activity*: "The mind is dissolved when all activity, which is synonymous with vibration in Consciousness, is given up. (III, 95, 35.) Mind and movement of Consciousness both are connected as fire and heat. One being absent, the other is surely to be. By the annihilation of one both are annihilated. (III, 95, 37.) *Samkalpa*, which arises in us on account of the ignorance of the Self, is the cause (root) of actions. (VIa, 124, 5.) The real giving up of actions is remaining peaceful, without any desire, without any thought (of doing or not doing that action), and without any egoistic feeling." (Vib, 3, 24.)<sup>2</sup> We have already seen that freedom from action is not a physical but a mental affair, according to Vasiṣṭha. We shall learn more about it in a future chapter.

(i) *Mental renunciation of everything*: To possess is to limit oneself. According to the great psychologist William James, our property and wealth constitute what

<sup>1</sup> न तदासाद्यते राज्यान् कान्ताजनसंगमात् ।

अनपायि सुखं सारं समत्वाद्यदवाप्यते ॥

द्वन्द्वोपशमसीमान्तं संरम्भज्वरनाशनम् ।

सर्वदुःखातपाम्भोदं समत्वं विद्धि राघव ॥

सुखदुःखेषु भीमेषु संततेषु महत्स्वपि ।

मनागपि न वैरस्यं प्रयान्ति समदृष्टयः ॥

<sup>2</sup> स्पन्दात्मकमविगमे तद्वत्प्रक्षीयते मनः ॥

वह्न्यौष्ण्ययोरिव सदा छिद्योश्चित्तकर्मणोः ।

द्वयोरैकतराभावे द्वयमेव विलीयते ॥

आत्मज्ञानात्समुत्पन्नः संकल्पः कर्मकारणम् ॥

अवेदनमसंवेद्यं यदवासनमासितम् ।

शान्तं सममनुल्लेखं स कमत्याग उच्यते ॥



has been called our material self. So long as we own a particular aspect of the Reality as our own and disown others as not ours, we cannot enjoy union with the Whole. When the Absolute Reality is my Self, and the entire universe the manifestation of the Absolute, all beings in my Self and I in all beings, it is not only absurd to believe that something is mine while another is not, and to cling to one and reject another, but also harmful, for, the limit of our thought or belief is the limit of our being. Either you own everything or nothing, if you have to realize your unity with the all-inclusive, yet all-transcending Absolute. But, the meaning of both renunciation and possession of all has been misunderstood in the history of the world, simply because people could not very often distinguish between the standpoint of the body and of the Self. Renunciation as it has been preached (and practised in India) by many teachers, is not what Vasiṣṭha teaches. Actual giving up of or running away from anything is not the true renunciation of it. For, as long as we are in the world, it is impossible to run away from or give up all things. As long as life continues, one has to be in actual possession of something or other. His renunciation cannot be complete. It is therefore impractical to renounce everything in this sense of the term. Nor is it of any use or value. This kind of renunciation will not bring peace to any person. Its futility is very well illustrated by Vasiṣṭha in the story of Cūḍālā and Śikhi-dhvaja. Renunciation for Vasiṣṭha is *only mental*. A man rolling in wealth and ruling over an empire may be a more "renounced" man than a recluse possessing no penny and having no home. Renunciation is only a mental attitude towards things of the world,

It is the feeling that nothing here belongs to any particular individual, but to God, as the *Iśa Upaniṣad* (opening verse) teaches us to believe, act and enjoy accordingly. Here is the view of Vasiṣṭha on the subject: "As long as everything is not given up, the Self is not obtained. For, the Self is said to transcend all particular states. (V, 58, 44.) He only attains the Self who makes effort to attain It with his whole self, giving up every other action. (V, 58, 46.) Who does not obtain anything, he obtains the Eternal, the Perfect Whole, and becomes happy. (V, 34, 76.) Giving up everything, renouncing all (*sarva-tyāga*), is the philosopher's stone which brings all misery to an end. (VIa, 90, 5.) Everything is obtained by renouncing all. Renunciation of everything is not simply a philosopher's stone, it is an empire over the whole world." (VIa, 90, 6.)<sup>1</sup> Brooks similarly writes: "Whoever sets his Power free has freed himself. This is true absolution; this alone is *being absolved*. None but the ungrudging servant holds the Key to Perfect Mastery. Once he craves no *other* wages, God's own SELF is *his*. He need not even ask for it. Truly is the Labourer worthy of his

<sup>1</sup> यावत्सर्वं न संत्यक्तं तावदात्मा न लभ्यते ।  
 सर्वावस्थापरित्यागे शेष आत्मेति कथ्यते ॥  
 यत्र सर्वात्मनैवात्मा लभाय यतते स्वयम् ।  
 त्यक्तान्यकार्यं प्राप्नोति तन्नाम नृप नेतरत् ॥  
 न किञ्चिदेन संप्राप्तं तेनेदं परमावृतम् ।  
 संप्राप्यान्तः प्रपूर्णेन सर्वं प्राप्तमखण्डितम् ॥  
 विद्धि चिन्तामणिं साधो सर्वत्यागमकृत्रिमम् ।  
 तमन्तं सर्वदुःखानां त्वं साधयसि शुद्धधीः ॥  
 सर्वत्यागेन शुद्धेन सर्वमासाद्यतेऽनघ ।  
 सर्वत्यागो हि साम्राज्यं किं चिन्तामणितो भवेत् ॥

hire! Whatever we may claim the master gives us; but once we cease to claim, he gives . . . Himself. When shall our clamour cease?" (F. T. Brooks: *The Gospel of life*, Vol. 1, p. 141-142.) Vasiṣṭha also says: "He who does not take this or that, the Whole is given to him. (VIa, 93, 62.) He who renounces everything (*sarvam*), everything becomes his and waits upon him." (VIa, 93, 59.)<sup>1</sup>

What then is the real renunciation of everything? "The renunciation of everything cannot be effected by giving up the home, the kingdom, or even the body. (VIa, 93, 29.) He in fact renounces all, who includes all within himself, and feels that he is immanent in all objects of the universe, past, present and future, like a thread in all the pearls of a garland. (VIa, 93, 49.) He gives up everything, who throws everything in the Ultimate Cause which is all, which is all around." (VIa, 93, 30.)<sup>2</sup> "The ideal of *tyāga* (renunciation), according to Vasiṣṭha, is embodied in a *maha-tyāgin* (great renouncer) who is characterized as follows: "He is a great renouncer who has *mentally* absolved himself from virtue and vice, pleasure and pain, life and death; from all desires, doubts, cravings, convictions; who does not own the body or the life in which he is living;

<sup>1</sup> न गृह्णाति हि यत्किञ्चित्सर्वं तस्मै प्रदीयते ॥  
सर्वं त्यजति यस्तस्य सर्वमेवोपतिष्ठते ॥

<sup>2</sup> साधो न देहत्यागेन न राज्यत्यजेन च ।  
न चोटजादिशोषेण सर्वत्यागो भवेन्नृप ॥  
सूत्रं मुक्ताफलेनैव जगज्जालं त्रिकालकम् ।  
सर्वमन्तः कृतं तेन येन सर्वं समुज्जितम् ॥  
यत्सर्वं सर्वतो यच्च तस्मिन्सर्वकारणे ।  
सर्वस्मिन्संपरित्यक्ते सर्वत्यागः कृतो भवेत् ॥



who does not cling to any proper or improper actions in his mind; who is not keenly aware of the existence of the mind, body and the senses; who has *internally* (*antah*) renounced all virtues and vices, all thoughts and desires; who has equally and fully given up all that is seen in the objective world." (VIa, 115, 33-38.) The real renunciation in fact is the renunciation of the mind which is the root of all things. "The renunciation of all things is another name for the renunciation of the mind, because the mind is all (things). (VIa, 111, 21.) It is the seed of all things as the seed of a tree." (VIa, 93, 34.)<sup>1</sup>

(j) *Samādhi or intense contemplation of the Absolute Reality*: The experience of *samādhi*, when one becomes so deeply merged in the idea of the Reality that he becomes unaware of everything else is also one of

<sup>1</sup> धर्माधर्मौ सुखं दुःखं तथा मरणजन्मनी ।  
 धिया येनेति संत्यक्तं महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 सर्वेच्छाः सकलाः शङ्काः सर्वेहाः सर्वनिश्चयाः ।  
 धिया येन परित्यक्ता महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 देहस्य मनसो दुःखैरिन्द्रियाणां मनःस्थितेः ।  
 नूनं येनोज्झिता सत्ता महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 न मे देहो न जन्मापि युक्तयुक्ते न कर्मणी ।  
 इति निश्चयवानन्तर्महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 येन धर्ममधर्मं च मनो मननमीहितम् ।  
 सर्वमन्तः परित्यक्तं महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 यावती दृश्यकलना सकलेयं विलोक्यते ।  
 सा येन सुष्ठु संत्यक्ता महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥  
 चित्तं सर्वमिति प्राहुस्तत्पक्त्वा पुत्र राजसे ।  
 चित्तत्यागं विदुः सर्वत्यागं सर्वविदो जनाः ॥  
 सर्वस्यैव मनो बीजं तरुबीजं तरोरिव ।

the methods of dissolving the mind and realizing the Absolute Experience. *Samādhi*, according to Vasiṣṭha, is a sort of Divine Madness, an intoxication of intense love of the Absolute, an intense occupation of the mind with the thought of the Self, in which one sees all around him nothing but Divinity, in which his own individuality is totally merged and is far below the threshold of consciousness. Thus says he: "The Absolute Experience, which is like an eternal sleep, can also be realized, if one can acquire the state of thought-suspended *samādhi*." (III, 1, 36.)<sup>1</sup> *Samādhi* is not any mysterious state. "By *samādhi* is not meant a state of silence or idleness. It means the awareness of the Reality. *Samādhi* means the *para prajñā*, the highest intuition, which shows us things as they are (in reality), in which eternal peace is felt, and concentration becomes an accomplished fact. That state of existence in which there is no agitation of the mind, in which the ego is at its ebb, which does not involve the duality of objects is called *samādhi*. The perfect state of the mind in which there is no idea of what is to be acquired and what is to be avoided, which is free from all cares, which is of full satisfaction, is called *samādhi*. There is a perpetual *samādhi* for the great-souled, since the time his mind is united with the Consciousness. (V, 62, 7-12.) *Samādhi* is intense desirelessness for objects of pleasure. (VIb, 45, 46.) Right knowledge in which all desires are entirely forsaken, which is the experience of joy and *Nirvāṇa*, is the real concentration. (VIb, 46, 18.) There is no other (better) *samādhi* than that state of existence in

<sup>1</sup> यदि वाऽपि समाधाने निर्विकल्पे स्थितिं व्रजेत् ।

तदक्षयमुपुत्तामं तन्मन्येतामलं पदम् ॥

which, on account of Self-knowledge, no taste for the objects of pleasure is experienced." (VIb, 46, 15.)<sup>1</sup> According to Plotinus, similarly, Ecstasy (corresponding to *Samādhi*) is "A state which transcends the self-consciousness of the individual, as its object transcends all particular determinateness. It is a sinking into the Divine Essence with an entire loss of self-consciousness. It is a possession of the deity, a unity of life with him, which mocks all description, all perception, and all that abstract thought can frame." (Windelband: *History of Philosophy*, Problem 18.)

These are the various ways of annihilating the mind or individuality, in order that the Absolute Experience may be realized and made our own. According to

<sup>1</sup> बद्धपद्मासनस्यापि कृतब्रह्माञ्जलेरपि ।  
 अविश्रान्तस्वभावस्य कः समाधिः कथं च वा ॥  
 तत्त्वावबोधो भगवन्सर्वांशतृणपावकः ।  
 प्रोक्तः समाधिशब्देन न तु तूष्णीमवस्थितिः ॥  
 समाहिता नित्यतृप्ता यथाभूतार्थदर्शिनी ।  
 साधो समाधिशब्देन परा प्रज्ञोच्यते बुधैः ॥  
 अक्षुब्धा निरहंकारा द्वन्द्वेष्वननुपातिनी ।  
 प्रोक्ता समाधिशब्देन मेरोः स्थिरतराकृतिः ॥  
 निश्चिन्ताऽधिगताभीष्टा हेयोपादेयवर्जिता ।  
 प्रोक्ता समाधिशब्देन परिपूर्णा मनोगतिः ॥  
 यतः प्रभृति बोधेन युक्तमात्यन्तिकं मनः ।  
 तदारभ्य समाधानमव्युच्छिन्नं महात्मनः ॥  
 परं विषयवैतृष्यं समाधानमुदाहृतम् ॥  
 सम्यग्ज्ञानं समुच्छृण्वं सदैवोज्झितवासनम् ।  
 ध्यानं भवति निर्वाणमानन्दपदमागतम् ॥  
 सर्वार्थशीतलत्वेन बलादध्याने यदागतम् ।  
 ज्ञानाद्विषयवैरस्यं स समाधिर्हि नेतरः ॥



Vasiṣṭha, this state, when the individuality is at its lowest ebb, is that of highest Joy, of Supreme Bliss, compared to which the worldly joys are of no worth. "The Joy which is experienced when the mind is dissolved is such that it cannot be experienced even in ruling over the whole world. (IV, 15, 20.) They alone have realized the highest state of happiness and joy who have transcended the mind, and are at peace in their Self." (IV, 15, 25.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> संशान्ते चित्तवेताले यामानन्दकलां तनुः ।  
 याति तामपि राज्येन जागतेन न गच्छति ॥  
 त एव सुखसंभोगसीमान्तं समुपगताः ।  
 महाविषया शान्तधियो ये याता विमनस्कताम् ॥

## CHAPTER V

### THE SEVEN STAGES OF SELF-REALIZATION

SELF-REALIZATION is thus the expansion of the individual into the Infinite Absolute Experience; it is the extinction of separateness in the Self which is in all and in which all beings are rooted. Speaking from our point of view, the point of view of the world, it is the transmutation of an individual with his little and limited material, social and spiritual *me* into a cosmic personality who feels his identity and relation with all beings equally, who feels equally under all circumstances, whom nothing binds, and who is happy under all circumstances. It is not extinction, but realization of the Self. It is an extinction only of that feeling which keeps us apart and forgetful of the Whole which we really are, and makes us an imaginary something, living a life of separation and misery.

But, this is not an easy task. It takes time for the individual to evolve into the Infinite Whole. What time it may take cannot be fixed as it depends on the efforts of each individual. The process may be completed within one life or it may extend over several lives. Death, of course, as we have already noted, does not undo the progress made in any life. Although the whole process is only a subjective one, of removing our ignorance, yet there is a long distance between the actual which is the finite individual and the ideal which is the Absolute Experience. Philosophers, who do not believe in the instantaneous and magical realization of the ideal, have always believed in the progressive

realization of it. Once the concept of progressive realization is admitted, there arises a problem of the stages of the progress. Jaina philosophers have pointed out fourteen definite stages (*guṇa-sthānas*) between the life of an ordinary man and the perfected *Kevalin*. (*Vide* C. R. Jaina: *The Practical Path*, p. 127.) The *Mahā-yāna* Buddhists have pointed out ten stages (*bhūmikas*) between an aspirant and his realization of Bodhi-sattvahood. (*Vide* Keith: *Buddhist Philosophy*, p. 291.) The Theosophists, likewise, distinguish five definite stages on the path of perfection from initiation to Masterhood. (*Vide* Jina-rāja-dāsa: *The First Principles of Theosophy*, p. 220.) The character and qualities of the traveller are variously described by them in accordance with the ideal to be achieved and the methods of its realization, with which we are not concerned here. Vasiṣṭha, with whom we are concerned here, points out seven stages on the path of Realization of the Absolute Experience by an individual. But he is not very particular and exact about his terminology of the stages, which he calls by different names in different places. The stages (*bhūmikas*) are described in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* in three different places and in three slightly different ways. The divergence is probably due to his idea that the stages are not actually fixed and defined, but arbitrarily differentiated in a process which is continual. Here we shall refer to all his divisions, as each one has its own significance and importance.

*The First view:*

"Philosophers describe the stages of realization in various ways. My opinion is this: (III, 118, 2.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> वदन्ति बहुभेदेन वादिनो योगभूमिकाः ।

मम त्वभिप्राया नूतनिमा एव शुभप्रदाः ॥



"The realization of knowledge has seven stages. Liberation is the goal beyond the seven stages. (III, 118, 3.) The first stage is called *Subhecchā*, which consists in the consciousness of one's ignorance, and the desire to know the truth through the study of the spiritual lore and association with the wise, after dissatisfaction with the worldly life. (III, 118, 8.) The second is *Vicāraṇa*, which is characterized by a virtuous life, consequent upon the distaste for worldly objects and effort in right direction due to the study of the scriptures and the company of the wise ones. (III, 118, 9.) The third stage, called *Tanu-mānasa* (thinness of mind) is realized when as a consequence of the previously achieved progress, non-attachment to the objects of senses is attained. (III, 118, 10.) The fourth, called *Sattvapatti* (attainment of *sattva*), is that stage when the aspirant has learnt to stay in the true Self. (III, 118, 11.) The fifth, *Asaṁsakti*, is that stage of realization, consequent on the practice of staying in the true Self, in which one becomes detached from the objective world. (III, 118, 12.) The sixth, *Padārtha-bhāvana*, is that stage of experience in which the things of the world are realized to be unreal. (III, 118, 13-14.) The seventh, *Turya-gā*, is that stage of realization when the distinctions are negated and the aspirant remains in his own being. (III, 118, 15.) The *jivan-mukta* (the liberated living man) lives in this state. Disembodied liberation is beyond this stage." (III, 118, 16.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> अवबोधं विदुर्ज्ञानं तदिदं सप्तभूमिकम् ।

मुक्तिस्तु ज्ञेयमित्युक्तं भूमिकासप्तकात्परम् ॥

स्थितः किं मूढ एवास्मि प्रेक्षयेद्दृष्टं शास्त्रसन्तानैः ।

वैराग्यपूर्वमिच्छेति शुभेच्छेत्युच्यते बुधैः ॥

*The Second view of the stages :*

"First the *yogin* should *brighten his intellect* by studying philosophical literature and by associating with the wise ones (*sādhus*). The second stage of the *yoga* is *Vicāraṇa* (thinking on the problems of philosophy). The third is *Asaṅga-bhāvanā* (affirmation of one's being detached from the worldly enjoyments). The fourth is *Vilāpani* in which all desires are annihilated. The fifth is *Suddha-samvin-maya*, the realization of pure consciousness and of joy. The sixth is *Sva-samvedana-rūpa* (becoming identified with and merged into one's own Consciousness). It is a state in which Bliss alone is experienced and the traveller on the path remains merged in Bliss as in sleep. The seventh and the last is called the *Turiya*. It is the state of liberation here,

शास्त्रसज्जनसंपर्कवैराग्याभ्यासपूर्वकम् ।  
 सदाचारप्रवृत्तिर्या प्रोच्यते सा विचारणा ॥  
 विचारणाशुभेच्छाभ्यामिन्द्रियार्थेष्वसक्तता ।  
 याऽत्र सा तनुतामावाप्तोच्यते तनुमानसा ॥  
 भूमिकात्रितयाभ्यासाच्चित्तेऽर्थं विरतेर्वशात् ।  
 सत्यात्मनि स्थितिः शुद्धे सत्त्वापत्तिरुदाहृता ॥  
 दशाचतुष्टयाभ्यासादसंसङ्गफलेन च ।  
 रूढसत्त्वचमत्कारा प्रोक्ताऽसंसक्तिनामिका ॥  
 भूमिकापञ्चकाभ्यासात्स्वात्मारामतया दृढम् ।  
 आम्यन्तराणां बाह्यानां पदार्थानामभावनात् ॥  
 परप्रयुक्तेन चिरं प्रयत्नेनार्थभावनात् ।  
 पदार्थभावनानाम्नी षष्ठी संजायते गतिः ॥  
 भूमिवद्कचिराभ्यासाद्भेदस्यानुपलम्भतः ।  
 यत्स्वभावैकनिष्ठत्वं सा ज्ञेया तुर्यगा गतिः ॥  
 एषा हि जीवन्मुक्तेषु तुर्याऽवस्थेह विद्यते ।  
 विदेहमुक्तिविषयस्तुर्यातीतमतः परम् ॥

which is characterized by equanimity, purity and agitationlessness. The state beyond the *Turiyā* is called the ultimate *Nirvāṇa*. It is the maturity of the seventh stage and is not experienced by the living ones. The first three stages are called the waking stages (*Jāgrat*) (probably because up to the third stages the *yogin* is fully alive to the existence of external objects which appear quite real to him). The fourth is called the dream (*svapna*) state, (because the objects begin to be recognized as unreal). The fifth and the sixth are called *Suṣupti* (sleep), on account of feeling intense happiness in these states." (VIa, 120, 1-8.)<sup>1</sup>

*The Third description of the stages of Self-realization:*

(1) "A number of cycles of birth and death having been passed through, discriminative consciousness

१ शास्त्रसंज्ञनसंपर्कः प्रज्ञामादौ विवर्धयेत् ।  
 प्रथमा भूमिकैषोक्ता योगस्यैव च योगिनः ॥  
 विचारणा द्वितीया स्यात्तृतीयाऽसङ्गभावना ।  
 विलापनी चतुर्थी स्याद्वासनाविलयात्मिका ॥  
 शुद्धसंविन्मयानन्दरूपा भवति पञ्चमी ।  
 अर्धसुप्तप्रबुद्धाभो जीवन्मुक्तोऽत्र तिष्ठति ॥  
 त्वसंवेदनरूपा च षष्ठी भवति भूमिका ।  
 आनन्दैकधनाकारा सुषुप्तसदृशस्थितिः ॥  
 तुर्यावस्थोपशान्ताऽथ मुक्तिरेवेह केवलम् ।  
 समता स्वच्छता सौम्या सप्तमी भूमिका भवेत् ॥  
 तुर्यातीता तु याऽवस्था परा निर्वाणरूपिणी ।  
 सप्तमी सा परिप्रोदा विषयः स्यान्न जीवताम् ॥  
 पूर्वावस्थात्रयं त्यक्त्वा जाग्रदित्येव संस्थितम् ।  
 चतुर्थी स्वप्न इत्युक्ता स्वप्नाभं यत्र वै जगत् ॥  
 आनन्दैकधनीभावात्सुषुप्ताख्या तु पञ्चमी ।  
 असंवेदनरूपाऽथ षष्ठी तुर्यपदाभिवा ॥



dawns upon the mind of the individual. He begins to think that the world is unreal, without any value, and that his life is not being lived properly. He wishes to be free from the process of births and deaths, and so; begins to think, study good works, and associate with good people. He performs good and noble actions, and hates the evil and cruel ones; fears committing sin, and does not like sensual pleasures. He speaks noble and sweet words which are appropriate to the occasion, time and place. (VIa, 126, 4-13.)<sup>1</sup>

(2) 'He then approaches renowned scholars and with their help studies critically the *Vedas*, the *Smṛtis*, Ethics, *Yoga* and Rituals. He, then, acquires efficiency in division and classification of things, and in judging the rightness or wrongness of actions. He acquires considerable freedom from pride, arrogance, delusion, avarice, etc., even though he may be apparently involved in

<sup>1</sup> अनेकजन्मनामन्ते विवेकी जायते पुमान् ॥

असारा च त संसारव्यवस्थाऽलं ममैतया ॥

कथं विरागवान्भूत्वा संसारान्नि तराम्यहम् ।

एवं विचारणपरो यदा भवति सन्मतिः ॥

विरागमुपयात्यन्तर्भावनास्वनुवासरम् ।

क्रियासूदारूपामु क्रमते मोदतेऽन्वहम् ॥

ग्राम्यासु जडचेष्टासु सततं विचिकित्सति ।

नोदाहरति मर्माणि पुण्यकर्माणि सेवते ॥

मनोनुद्वेगाकारीणि मूढकर्माणि सेवते ।

पापाद्विभेति सततं न च भोगमपेक्षते ॥

स्नेहप्रणयगर्भाणि पेशलान्युचितानि च ।

देशकालोपपन्नानि वचनान्यभिभाषते ॥

मनसा कर्मणा वाचा सज्जनानुप्रसेवते ॥

यतः कुतश्चिदानीय ज्ञानशास्त्राण्यवेक्षते ॥

them. By this time he has completely mastered the secrets of all sciences and knows the nature of things. (VIa, 126, 15-18.)<sup>1</sup>

(3) "Having thus cultivated his intellect, he now begins to lead a life of solitude, austerity, spiritual practices, etc. He takes part in talks which deal only with the undesirability of the worldly life, and so help in generating dissatisfaction with it. He passes his time in detachment (*asaṅga*) and is always peaceful and happy in that state. (VIa, 126, 20-22.)<sup>2</sup>

(4) "As a consequence of the practice on the previous three stages, the ignorance of the aspirant comes to an end, and right knowledge dawns upon him. When, with the mind controlled, he comes to realize the existence of the One partless and eternal Reality which is uniformly and equally present everywhere. He

<sup>1</sup> श्रुतिस्मृतिसदाचारधारणाध्यानकर्मणाम् ।

मुख्यया व्याख्यया ख्याताञ्छ्रयते श्रेष्ठपण्डितान् ॥

पदार्थप्रविभागज्ञः कार्याकार्यविनिर्णयम् ।

जानात्यधिगतश्रव्यो गृहं गृहपतिर्यथा ॥

मदाभिमानमात्सर्यमोहलोभातिशायिताम् ।

बहिरप्याश्रितामीषत्यज्यहिरिव त्वचम् ॥

इत्थंभूतमतिः शास्त्रगुरुसजनसेवनात् ।

सरहस्यमशेषेण यथावदधिगच्छति ॥

<sup>2</sup> यथावच्छात्रवाक्यार्थं मतिमाधाय निश्चलम् ।

तापसाश्रमविश्रामैरध्यात्मकयनक्रमैः ॥

संसारनिन्दकैस्तद्वैराग्यकरणक्रमैः ।

शिलाशय्यासमासीनो जरयत्यायुरात्ततम् ॥

वनवासविहारेण चित्तोपशमशोभिना ।

असङ्गमुखसौम्येन कालं नयति नीतिमान् ॥

now looks upon the objects of the world as things of dream. (VIa, 126, 58-60.)<sup>1</sup>

(5) "They then come to the fifth stage of experience. All differences for them have merged in the Unity of which alone they are now conscious. This experience of unity is characterized by joy, being ever merged in which the aspirant on this stage experiences a state like that of intense sleep. Though outwardly busy and active, the traveller on this stage is quite at peace within. (VIa, 126, 62-65.)<sup>2</sup>

(6) "Then there comes a stage of experience in which there is no idea of being or non-being, self or not-self. The mind is no longer experienced. Duality and unity are both transcended. The aspirant now is a liberated man living here. All the knots of his desires are broken, all doubts are solved. Although not yet absolutely merged in the Absolute, he is merged to all purposes. He is void within, void without (for there is no desire, thought or *kalpanā* in him) like an empty jar in an empty space. He is full within and full without (for he is identical with the ultimate plenum,

<sup>1</sup> भूमिकात्रितयाभ्यासादज्ञाने क्षयमागते ।  
सम्यग्ज्ञानोदये चित्ते पूर्णचन्द्रोदयोपमे ॥  
निर्विभागमनाद्यन्तं योगिनो युक्तचेतसः ।  
समं सर्वं प्रपश्यन्ति चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः ॥  
पश्यन्ति स्वप्नवल्लोकांश्चतुर्थी भूमिकामिताः ।

<sup>2</sup> सत्तावशेष एवास्ते पञ्चमी भूमिकां गतः ॥  
शान्तावशेषविशेषांश्चिद्वैतमात्रके ।  
गलितवैतनिर्भासमुदितोऽन्तः प्रबुद्धवान् ॥  
सुषुप्तवन एवास्ते पञ्चमी भूमिकामितः ।  
अन्तर्मुखतया तिष्ठन्बहिर्वृत्तिपरोऽपि सन् ॥  
परिशान्ततया नित्यं निद्रालुरिव लक्ष्यते ॥



the essence of all things) like a full jar in a full ocean. He is this as well as not this. (VIa, 126, 66-69.)<sup>1</sup>

(7) "Beyond that is the Absolute Experience, which is the Ultimate goal of all stages of becoming, the Eternal Peace, inexpressible in words, yet somehow always taught. It is called Liberation, It is called the *Brahman*, It is called *Nirvāṇa*. It is the fullest of the full." (VIa, 126, 71, 73; III, 9, 25.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यत्र नासन्न सद्वृत्तो नाहं नाप्यनहंकृतिः ॥

केवलं क्षीणमननमास्ते द्वैतैक्यनिर्गतः ।

निर्ग्रन्थिः शान्तसदेहो जीवन्मुक्तो विभावनः ॥

अनिर्वाणोऽपि निर्वाणश्चिददीप इव स्थितः ।

अन्तः शून्यो बहिः शून्यः शून्यः कुम्भ इवाम्बरे ॥

अन्तः पूर्णो बहिः पूर्णः पूर्णः कुम्भ इवाणवे ।

किञ्चिदेवैव संपन्नस्त्वथ वैव न किञ्चन ॥

<sup>2</sup> अगम्या वचसां शान्ता सा सीमा भवभूमिषु ॥

नित्यमव्ययपदश्याऽपि कथञ्चिदुपदिश्यते ॥

मुक्तिर्योच्यते राम ब्रह्मतत्समुदाहृतम् ।

निर्वाणमेतत्कथितं पूर्णात्पूर्णतराकृति ॥

## CHAPTER VI

### FREEDOM FROM THE LAW OF KARMA

SELF-REALIZATION, according to Vasiṣṭha, is really, as it must have become quite evident by this time, a subjective change of vision from that of an individual to that of the Absolute. The objectivity, according to his idealism, being only a reflex of the subject, will change in accordance with the change in the subject, and therefore need not be bothered about. We experience a world as long as there is a will to experience it, no matter whether that will is consciously or subconsciously working in us. Our objective world, on whatever plane we may be, is only what is fitted to us, what we ourselves have wished for, worked for, and deserved; and it will change in accordance with our wishes, efforts and progress or degradation. There is thus a possibility of the total absense of objectivity in an experience where subjectivity as such is no longer asserted or affirmed; when all willing, all desires, and all efforts to be something, to have something, and to achieve something, are absolutely extinct. But as long as that kind of subjectivity is not evolved in us, we are bound to have before our vision an objective world. Every desire we entertain, every effort we make to get anything, every feeling of attachment for any object we ever have in our heart, every idea we actively or passively affirm, is a bond for us in so far that we cannot but, some time or other, undergo an

experience in which what we once desired, strived for, loved or affirmed, is in our possession, is by our side, is in our embrace, or is before us, whether we wish to have it or not. Unfortunately, the chances are, and this is the only evil in the world, that by the time the thing we desired, strived for, loved or wished to see, is ours, we have shifted our desire, effort or love to other things, and the result is that the contents of our present world-experience are not pleasant to us, we do not enjoy what we ourselves wanted to enjoy. Yet, whether we enjoy them or not, whether we like them or not, whether we love them or not, the contents of our experience are to be what we by our own will, desire, and affirmation have caused them to be. This is an inevitable law. It is called the Law of *Karma-phala* by Vasiṣṭha. It is the very nature (*svabhāva*) of Reality. It is a universal law. There is no exception to it anywhere. "There is no mountain, no sky, no ocean, no heaven, where our actions do not fructify in results (*phala*). (III, 95, 33.) Every action done now or in the past is an effort which cannot but, some time or other, fructify into results." (III, 95, 34.)<sup>1</sup> [Compare what Geley writes: "Every act, even every desire and inclination, has an inevitable reaction in one form or other of his existences. . . . This inherent justice is not only individual, it is also collective." (Gustave Geley: *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, p. 314.) James Allen similarly writes: "Perfect justice upholds the

<sup>1</sup> न स शैलो न तद्वयोम न सोऽन्विष्व न विष्टपम् ।

अस्ति यत्र फलं नास्ति कृतानामात्मकर्मणाम् ॥

ऐहिकं प्राप्तं वाऽपि कर्म यद्विस्तं स्फुरत् ।

पौरुषोऽसौ परो यत्नो न कदाचन निष्फलः ॥



universe; perfect justice regulates human life and conduct. . . . Man can (and does) choose what causes he shall set in operation, but he cannot change the nature of effects, he can decide what thoughts he shall think, what deeds he shall do, but he has no power over the *result* of those thoughts and deeds; these are regulated by the over-ruling law." (James Allen: *Book of Meditations*, p. 248.)

By action or *karma*, we are not to understand only the physical action manifested through the physical body directed towards external objects. The real action is *willing*. It is really mental, and not physical. The physical action is only an external expression of the real action which is a vibration of volition in the mind. "*Karma* is said by the wise to be movement into activity. (III, 95, 32.) The root of actions lies in the vibration of the mind, the volition of the will. It is the mental change that really fructifies into results. (III, 95, 29.) The seed of action is *manah-spandah* (the vibration of the will). It is said to be so, and is also thus experienced. The physical activities are only the various sides of mental willing." (III, 96, 11.)<sup>1</sup>

Every action clings to the actor as a part of his personality, as long as it has not fructified itself. Every act is an expression of the personality and in its own turn changes the personality. The personality or individuality is in fact nothing but what is constituted by

<sup>1</sup> क्रियास्पन्दो जगत्स्मिन्कर्मैति कथितो बुधैः ॥

मनसोऽयं समुन्मेषः कलाकलनरूपतः ।

एतत्तत्कर्मणां बीजं फलमस्यैव विशते ॥

कर्मबीजं मनःस्पन्दः कथ्यतेऽथानुभूयते ।

क्रियास्तु विविधास्तस्य शाखाश्चित्रफलास्तरोः ॥

volitions. This seems to be the meaning of Vasiṣṭha when he says that the *puruṣa* (person) and *karma* (action) are not two different things (*bhinna*). "*Karma* is *puruṣa* and *puruṣa* is *karma*. They are not two entities, but are identically the same." (VIb, 28, 8.) Our individuality is constituted by our tendency to peculiar kind of willing. When willing is no more, we cease to be individuals. "The names—gods, men and actions are synonymous with *saṃvit-spanda* (will). (VIb, 28, 10.) The mind is nothing apart from its activities of will and imagination, as a qualified thing ceases to be the same without its peculiar quality." (III, 96, 6.)<sup>1</sup> So, according to Vasiṣṭha, as also according to modern idealists of the West, the individuality is another name for purposive activity.

Individuality is not an eternal reality. It originates and is dissolved. It begins with individual willing and comes to an end when individual willing is over. *Karmas* which fructify in the objective world-contents, being only the various modes of willing, also begin with the commencement of willing, desiring or imagining (all being the same fundamentally), which means the commencement of individuality. So there cannot be any actions already existing for an individual to be fructified before the commencement of the career of any individual. Nor will there remain any action to be fructified when an

<sup>1</sup> कर्मैव पुरुषो राम पुरुषस्यैव कर्मता ।  
एते ह्यभिन्ने विद्धि त्वं यथा तुहिनशीतले ॥  
संवित्स्पन्दरसस्यैव दैवकर्मनरादयः ।  
पर्यायशब्दा न पुनः पृथक्कर्मोदयः स्थिताः ॥  
कल्पनात्मिकया कर्मशक्त्या विरहितं मनः ।  
न संभवति लोकेऽस्मिन्गुणहीनो गुणी यथा ॥

individuality is dissolved, for an individuality is dissolved only when there is no more any action to be fructified into any content of the objective world. [There cannot, therefore, Vasiṣṭha thinks, be any *previous karmas* (*prāktanāni karmāṇi*) in existence, in store, for an individual before the commencement of his individuality. Our *karma* is our own creation, in which we are absolutely free. We get bound through our own freedom. There are no *karmas* of any previous creation which have to be fructified in the present one, as other Indian thinkers have postulated. (*Vide Śaṅkara's Commentary on the Brahmasūtras*, II, 1, 35-36.) Vasiṣṭha alone in Indian philosophy believes in absolute freedom, for God as well as for an individual. Creation is an act of absolute freedom without any determination by the *karmas* of a previous *kalpa* (cycle). No individual ever suffers the consequences but of his own willing: Thus we find him saying: "The springing up of Brahṁā and other individuals at the beginning of creation is not due to any previous *karmas*. (VIb, 142, 24.) There are no previous *karmas* in store for any individual before the commencement of the present cycle of creative activity. The Absolute Itself manifests in the form of the world." (VIb, 143, 26.)<sup>1</sup>]

But there may be a very serious question raised here against the position of Vasiṣṭha. It is the difficulty that led other philosophers to postulate beginninglessness of *karmas* and of individuality. Why should I, a particular individual, born of the Creative Impulse in the

<sup>1</sup> सर्गादिषु स्वयं भान्ति ब्रह्माद्या ये स्वयंभुवः ।

विज्ञप्तिमात्रदेहास्ते न तेषां जन्मकर्मणि ॥

सर्गादौ प्राक्तनं कर्म विद्यते नेह कस्यचित् ।

सर्गादौ सर्गरूपेण ब्रह्मैवेत्थं विजृम्भते ॥



Absolute Experience, suffer from the evils of individuality? If my coming into existence of suffering and misery, is thus only a chance-production for me, my freedom is only a chimera. It is a freedom only for the Absolute, but the commencement of bondage for me. For, is not individuality a bondage? If it is the *Lila* (play) of the Absolute, it is like the free play of a child with fire in hand in setting others' houses to it. It is the realization of His joy that brings immense misery to others. Has Vasiṣṭha any answer to this ultimate difficulty of all theistic metaphysics? He says that the manifestation of the Absolute in the world as such is nothing binding to any body. In this very world there are individuals who always see all beings in One Self and the One Self in all beings and are not bound to this or that particular form, but ever feel their identity with the Absolute Whole, *i.e.*, there are individuals who ever remain free in spite of their being in the world. They do not undergo the changes of life and death, of pleasure and pain, or of joy and sorrow. The reason why others do not share this experience is not that any body else has made them so, but only because they are fascinated by particulars, by this or that, and are so occupied with this or that thought that they do not care to look at the beauty and fullness of the Whole. It is their own fault for which they suffer. The very moment they wish to be free, they can be free. They have created their own *karmas* by neglecting the Whole and busying themselves with a part only. "Innumerable individuals originate from the Absolute at the commencement of the creation, in the same way as Brahmā, etc. (VIb, 142, 27.) Those who do not hypostatize themselves into separate beings from the Absolute, and feel always identical with It, such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu,

S'iva, etc., are always free. (VIb, 142, 30.) But those who ignorantly (unmindful of bad consequences) involve themselves into duality (separateness from the Absolute), and begin to feel their unreal individuality (i.e., assume false individuality), *karma* is born for them. (VIb, 142, 28-29.) There is no *karma* (binding) for any individual at the commencement of creation. They undergo the consequences of *karmas* in accordance with their own imagination, having created *karma* for themselves." (VIb, 142, 38, 41.)<sup>1</sup> The real difficulty, it would appear, has not been fully solved by Vasiṣṭha, although his solution of the problem appears to be more satisfactory than those of other thinkers.

Let us now leave aside the question of the origin of *karma*, and learn how to be free from it. The problem of freedom from the law of *karma* is very important in the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, specially because he does not require an aspirant after Self-realization or Freedom to renounce the activities of life,

<sup>1</sup> यथा ब्रह्मादयो भान्ति सर्गादौ ब्रह्मरूपिणः ।  
 भान्ति जीवास्तथाऽन्येऽपि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ॥  
 येस्तु न ब्रह्मणोऽन्यत्वं बुद्धं बोधमहात्मनि ।  
 निरवशास्त एतेऽत्र ब्रह्मविष्णुहरादयः ॥  
 किं तु ये ब्रह्मणोऽन्यत्वं बुध्यन्तेऽसात्त्विकोद्भवाः ।  
 अबोधो ये त्वत्विदास्यं बुद्धा द्वैतमिदं स्वयम् ॥  
 तेषामुत्तरकालं तत्कर्मभिर्जन्म दृश्यते ।  
 स्वयमेव तथाभूतैस्तेरवस्तुत्वमाश्रितम् ॥  
 न संभवति जीवस्य सर्गादौ कर्म कस्यचित् ।  
 पश्चात्स्वकर्म निर्माय भुङ्क्ते कल्पनया स चित् ॥  
 सर्गे सर्गतया रूढे भवेत्प्राक्कर्मकल्पना ।  
 पश्चाज्जीवा भ्रमन्तीमे कर्मपाशवशोऽकृताः ॥

The law of *karma* is according to him the universal law. Now, if every *karma* or action binds us to its fruit, which we have to experience either in this or some other life, how can any man who does not renounce actions be at all liberated from the experience of an objective world? Moreover, as he says, there is no moment in life when a person is not active. The whole life is full of actions. If every action has to bind us to its result, we can never be free. Vasiṣṭha, tells us that all actions as such do not bind us. The binding element in an action is *desire* (*Vasana*). If an action, whether physical or mental, is not coloured with desire, its result does not accrue to us. We have not to experience at some future occasion the fruits of those actions which are performed by us desirelessly. "All actions become fruitless for the individual, when they are performed with no desire for any result for oneself. (VIa, 87, 19.) Desireless actions never bring any fruit to the performer. (VIa, 87, 21.) The essence of those actions which bind a man to their results is desire. Therefore, all actions of an ignorant man bind him to their fruits, because he performs them with a desire to obtain something for himself, whereas the wise man is not bound to the fruits of his activities, as he does not perform them with any desire to obtain anything for himself." (VIa, 27, 18.)<sup>1</sup> Compare a similar

<sup>1</sup> सर्वा हि वासनाभावे प्रयान्त्यफलां क्रियाः ।

अशुभाः फलवन्त्योऽपि सेकाभावे लता इव ॥

न स्वभावेन फलति यथा शरलता फलम् ।

क्रिया निर्वासना पुत्र फलं फलति नो तथा ॥

वासनामात्रसारत्वादज्ञस्य सफलाः क्रियाः ।

सर्वा एवाफला ज्ञस्य वासनामात्रसंश्रयात् ॥



idea expressed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (IV, 21-22): "Hoping for naught, his mind and self controlled, having abandoned all greed, performing action by the body alone, he does not commit sin. Content with whatsoever he obtains without effort, free from the pairs of opposites, without envy, balanced in success and failure, though acting he is not bound."

Thus, the person who is free from desire to obtain anything through his action is not at all bound to have its result. Desire manifests into attachment to the action or the fruit of the action, and the creative imagination of the individual, with the force of his desire guiding it, brings, early or late, the desired result into experience. The law of *karma* concerns only such *karmas*, for such *karmas* alone are *karmas* really. Others are not so. In the same way agency or responsibility of *karmas* has a meaning only with regard to such *karmas* that are done with some desire or motive. And he alone is really an actor, an agent or a doer of some action, who does it with some desire or motive. Such an agent alone suffers the consequences. Another thing that Vasiṣṭha very emphatically points out in this connection is that such actions as bind us to their fruits need not even be performed physically. They bind us even if they enter our mind. A mere wish to do them binds us. And in the case of one who has no desire, even if an action has been physically performed, it is no action at all. Thus says he: "No harm is done by any action to him who does it with an equanimous, balanced, and pure mind. (VIb, 199, 7.) He whose heart is not attached to any action, will not undergo any experience of its fruit, in spite of his being engaged in the action which may be good or bad. (VIb, 199, 33.) A fool, on the other hand, who

has not given up desires merges deeper and deeper in the world-experience, in spite of his not being actually engaged in good or bad actions. (VIb, 199, 34.) Agency (*kartṛtva*) really means the desire to have something following the idea that the thing is worth having, and to give up something following the idea that the thing is not worth having. (IV, 38, 2.) Having thus desired to have or to avoid an object, a man performs some action through which the result follows. Then he enjoys the result of his action. The enjoyment of the result (*bhokṛtva*) is due to one's agency (*kartṛtva*). (IV, 38, 2.) Whether a man physically acts or not, he will experience the object of his desire, whether in heaven or hell. (IV, 38, 8.) Those who know the Truth are not bound to the fruits of action, whether they do them or not, for they have no desire for the fruit of action. (IV, 38, 6.) In fact what one does with his mind is an action, and that which is done merely by the physical body is no action. (IV, 38, 7.) A man dreaming to be falling into a pit experiences the fear of his fall even when his physical body is lying asleep in the bed. There may be another case of a man who actually (physically) falls down in a pit while he is fast asleep, and yet is quite insensible of the fall. Hence, whether a man is an actual doer of an action or not, he experiences only that on which his heart is set. This is our view. (IV, 38, 12-13.) Thus, the mind itself is the seed of all actions, all desired objects, all things, all worlds, all states. Having given it up, one is free from all actions and all pains. The wise is freed from the actions of the mind even, by transcending it. He is no longer under the control of even the mental acts, he is not coloured by them. He becomes emptied of all actions. (IV, 38, 16.) Even actually doing things



in the world, a wise man does not come to grief, if he acts out of mere sport (*līlā*) like a child, now engaging in them, now giving them up without the least idea whether they are worthy of being done or of avoidance. (IV, 38, 17.) The real freedom from action is the freedom from desire, craving or purposive willing. One who has attained the peace of desirelessness, has nothing to do with physical doing or not doing of actions." (VIa, 3, 25, 27.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> समया स्वच्छया बुद्ध्या सततं निर्विकारया ।

यथा यत्क्रियते राम तददोषाय सर्वदा ॥

शुभाशुभाः क्रिया नित्यं कुर्वन्परिहरन्पि ।

पुनरेति न संसारमसंसक्तमना मुनिः ॥

शुभाशुभाः क्रिया नित्यमकुर्वन्पि दुर्मतिः ॥

निमज्जत्येव संसारे परित्यक्तमनाः शठः ॥

यो ह्यन्तःस्थाया मनोवृत्तेर्निश्चय उपादेयताप्रत्ययो वासनाभिधानस्तत्कर्तृत्व-  
शब्देनोच्यते ॥

चेष्टावशात्तादृक्फलभोक्तृत्वं वासनानुरूपं स्पन्दते पुरुषः स्पन्दानुरूपं फलमनु-  
भवति । फलभोक्तृत्वं नाम कर्तृत्वादिति सिद्धान्तः ॥

कुर्वतोऽकुर्वतो वाऽपि स्वर्गेऽपि नरकेऽपि वा ।

यादृग्वासनमेतत्स्थान्मनस्तदनुभूयते ॥

ज्ञाततत्त्वो हि शिथिलोभूतवासनः कुर्वन्पि फलं नानुसंदधाति । अथ च स्पन्द-  
मात्रं केवलं करोत्यसक्तबुद्धिः संप्राप्तमपि फलमात्मैवेदं सर्वमेव कर्मफलमनुभवति । अकुर्वन्पि  
करोति मग्नमनाः ॥

मनो यत्करोति तत्कृतं भवति यन्न करोति तन्न कृतं भवति । अतो मन एव कर्तुं  
न देहः ॥

अकुर्वन्पि श्वभ्रपतनं शय्यासनगतोऽपि श्वभ्रपातवासनावासिते चेतसि श्वभ्रपतन-  
दुःखमनुभवति । अपरस्तु कुर्वन्पि श्वभ्रपतनं परमुपशममुपगतवति मनसि शय्यासन-  
सुखमनुभवति । एवमनयोः शय्यासनश्वभ्रपातयोरैकः श्वभ्रपतनस्याकर्ताऽपि कर्ता संपन्नो  
द्वितीयश्च श्वभ्रपतनस्य कर्ताऽप्यकर्ता संपन्नश्चित्तवशात् । तस्माच्चित्तं तन्मयो भवति पुरुष  
इति सिद्धान्तः । तेन तत्र कर्तृकर्तृत्वं नियमसंसक्तं भवतु चेतः ॥



The wise man who has transcended all desires, and is above all selfish willing, is thus beyond the pale of the Law of *Karma-phala*. He is not bound by any of his actions to experience its consequences in this or in any other life. When all the previous actions have fructified, there is no more necessity in the case of the wise, of undergoing any other life. His personality will be dissolved when he has finished to experience the fruits of his previous willing—previous to the rise of desirelessness.

How then should a wise man, who has no desire or motive of his own, pass his time in this world so long as his body is not dissolved? Has he any duties to perform? Has he any Cosmic responsibility to act, if not individual? This is a very important question, a question which the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhism has probably answered better than any other school of Indian Philosophy, in the conception of a Bodhi-sattva, who when liberated imposes upon himself the task of helping others on their path to Liberation, and who is not so anxious

एवं मनः सर्वकर्मणां सर्वहितानां सर्वभावानां सर्वलोकानां सर्वगतीनां बीजम् ।  
तस्मिन्परिहृते सर्वकर्माणि परिहृतानि भवन्ति सर्वदुःखानि क्षीयन्ते सर्वकर्माणि लयमुप-  
यान्ति । मानसेनापि कर्मणा यत्कृतेनाऽपि ज्ञो नाक्रम्यते न वशीक्रियते न रञ्जनामुपैत्य-  
व्यतिरिक्तात् ॥

यथा बालो मनसा नगरस्य निर्माणं निर्गुष्टं च कुर्वन्नगरनिर्माणं मनःकृतमकृतमिव  
लीलयाऽनुभवति नोपादेयतया सुखदुःखमकृत्रिममिति पश्यति नगरनिर्मथनं च मनःकृतं  
कृतमिति पश्यतीति दुःखमपि लीलयाऽनुभवन्नपि न दुःखमिति पश्यति । एवमसौ  
परमार्थतः कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यत एवेति ॥

अवेदनमसंवेद्यं यदवासनमासितम् ।

शान्तं सममनुल्लेखं स कर्मत्याग उच्यते ॥

समूलकर्मसंत्यागेनैव ये शान्तिमास्थिताः ।

नैव तेषां कृतेनार्यो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ॥

to enter the final stage of *Nirvāṇa* as to put others on the track. It is probably this conception which the modern Theosophists have incorporated in their conception of the Masters. In the Hindu thought it is the *Bhagavad-gītā* alone in which we find an idea of self-imposed duty for *loka-saṁgraha* (welfare of the world). (III, 20.) Kṛṣṇa also says that although he has no duties to perform in the three worlds (III, 22), yet for the sake of protecting the good and destroying the evil ones, and to establish the reign of Law (*dharma*), he comes down to the earth. (IV, 7-8.) But he is not speaking there in the capacity of a liberated living man, but in that of a Divinity, and so his statement would not set an ideal for a liberated man. What has Vasiṣṭha to say on this problem? We have already seen that he does not ask the liberated man or woman to retire from the worldly duties and activities. A peep into the stories of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* will reveal that most of his *jīvan-muktas* (liberated living ones) are men or women of action, who rule over kingdoms or live in their families. The stories of Janaka, Bhagī-ratha, Prahlāda and the queen Cūḍālā, may serve as illustrations of this view. Vasiṣṭha himself and his illustrious disciple Rāma may be considered to be the best embodiment of Liberation. But there is no idea of any individual or cosmic duty to be performed by one who has realized the Self and has become liberated. Probably because duty itself is a bond. The liberated ones may be doing all that passes by the name good, yet they, according to Vasiṣṭha, are not bound to do it. They may or may not. He believes in the fullest freedom. It is not that Vasiṣṭha does not believe in duties or moral law. He believes in a moral law and in moral actions, but urges on the unliberated ones alone to be



governed by them, for the transgression of the moral law and the performance of evil actions have undesirable consequences. But the liberated ones to whom pleasure or pain are equal in value and who have gone beyond the stage of differentiations and distinctions, who see here nothing but the One Self, have no duty to perform and no moral law to obey. They are also above the wish of 'doing good to others'. There is no other good in life than Self-knowledge and Liberation. That cannot be, according to Vasiṣṭha, acquired except by self-effort and Self-intuition of the aspirant; and if any external help is required, the liberated one would not grudge to give it, for he is a friend of all. The whole attitude of a liberated person towards life is summed up in three words, that he is a *mahā-kartā* (great doer), *mahā-bhoktā* (great enjoyer) and *mahā-tyāgin* (great renouncer). If the term ethics could be used for this, Vasiṣṭha's ethics may be called the transcendental ethics, which is as follows:

"Performance of duty is incumbent on those who have not yet got their eyes opened by knowledge. A man should not throw his blanket away as long as he has not got a more valuable silk wrapper. (VIa, 87, 17.) The knower of the Self is not subject to injunctions and prohibitions, for, what for will one act whose desires are totally dropped? (VIb, 37, 31.) But the ignorant who has his mind in prominence (*i.e.*, has desires in abundance) will surely come to grief if he transgresses the ethical laws, like a fish going beyond water. (VIa, 69, 9.) Everything here is eternal and infinite Peace. There is nothing which ought to be done and which ought not to be done. (VIb, 1, 28.) Having given up the idea that you have to experience the fruits of your actions, you



may engage yourself in actions that happen to fall to your lot in the natural flow of events without any anxiety. (VIa, 1, 16.) One should do whatever falls to his share without clinging to it. (III, 88, 11.) For the knower there is nothing to be hated or not hated, nothing worthy of attainment or avoidance, nothing his or not his. (VIa, 69, 13.) Live in this world doing everything externally as others do, but remaining within free from desire, attachment and hopes. (V, 18, 18.) Move in this world as large-hearted, following all codes of conduct, and like a gentleman externally, but above everything in the heart. (V, 18, 19.) Live in this world externally as if intensely busy, but internally be free from all activities; externally as a doer of actions, but internally quite free from them. (V, 18, 22.) Externally follow all rules of good conduct, but internally be fully aware of your freedom from them. Be fully equanimous within, with all your desires at rest. (IV, 15, 44.) Free from all desires and fixed in the Self, do all physical actions which ought to be done as long as the body lasts. (IV, 15, 45.) Having known (the Truth) and fixed yourself in the state which is a balance of being and non-being, neither accept nor deny the internal as well as external objects. (IV, 46, 14.) Even while engaged in actions remain empty-hearted, free from desire, attachment and taste for the objects. (IV, 46, 15.) As a wise man has no desire to perform an action, so also he has no desire to give up any action. (III, 88, 12.) Let your actions be as mechanically performed as the legs of a traveller move when he is intently thinking of the place where he has to reach, and is absolutely forgetful of his walking. (VIb, 1, 15.) Do not have the least attachment for your actions. Do them as a machine does,

for the sake of others. (VIb, 1, 17.) Be a *mahā-karta* (great doer), *mahā-bhokta* (great enjoyer) and *mahā-tyāgin* (great renouncer). (VIa, 115, 1.) He is a great doer who does everything, experiences likes and dislikes, undergoes pleasure and pain, and acts in accordance with or against law, with fruits in view or not in view—without any care or anxiety (*anapekṣeṇa*). (VIa, 115, 12.) He is a great enjoyer who neither desires anything nor hates anything, but enjoys everything natural. (VIa, 115, 21.) He is a great renouncer who has inwardly given up all desires, all doubts, all prejudices, and all strivings." (VIa, 115, 34.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> अलब्धज्ञानदृष्टीनां क्रिया पुत्र परायणम् ।

यस्य नास्त्यम्बरं पटं कम्बलं किं सज्यसौ ॥

प्रतिषेधविधीनां तु तज्ज्ञो न विषयः क्वचित् ।

शान्तसर्वैषणेच्छस्य कोऽस्य किं वक्ति किंकृते ॥

अज्ञस्तु दितचित्तत्वात्क्रियानियमनं विना ।

गच्छन्त्यायेन मात्स्येन परं दुःखं प्रयाति हि ॥

नेह कार्यं ना वाऽकार्यमस्ति किंचन कुत्रचित् ।

सर्वं शिवमजं शान्तमनन्तं प्राग्बदास्यताम् ॥

सर्वकर्मफलभोगमलं विस्मृत्य सुप्तवत् ।

प्रवाहपतिते कार्ये स्पन्दस्व गतवेदनम् ॥

यथाप्राप्तं हि कर्तव्यमसक्तेन सदा सता ।

मुकुरेणाकलङ्केन प्रतिबिम्बक्रिया यथा ॥

न निन्द्यमस्ति नानिन्द्यं नोपादयं न हेयता ।

न चात्मीयं न च परं कर्म ह्यविषयं क्वचित् ॥

अन्तः संयुक्तसर्वांशो वीतरागो विवासनः ।

बहिः सर्वसमाचारो लोके विहर राघव ॥

उदारः पेशलाचारः सर्वाचारानुवृत्तिमान् ।

अन्तः सर्वपरित्यागी लोके विहर राघव ॥

We shall close this chapter with the character of an Ārya (gentleman) described by Vasiṣṭha, which indicates how much importance he attached to actions and duties in life. A gentleman, according to him, is he who always does what ought to be done, and does not do what ought not to be done, and always abides by the moral code proper to him. (VIa, 121, 54.) "He is

बहिः कृत्रिमसंस्मभो हृदि संस्मभवर्जितः ।  
 कर्ता बहिरकर्ताऽन्तर्लोके विहर राघव ॥  
 बहिलोकोचिताचारस्त्वन्तराचारवर्जितः ।  
 समो ह्यतीव तिष्ठ त्वं संशान्तसकल्लेपणः ॥  
 संवैषणाविमुक्तेन स्वात्मनाऽऽत्मनि तिष्ठता ।  
 कुरु कर्माणि कार्याणि नूनं देहस्य संस्थितिः ॥  
 शुद्धं सदसतोर्मध्यं पदं बुद्ध्याऽवलम्ब्य च ।  
 सबाह्याभ्यन्तरं दृश्यं मा गृहाण विमुञ्च मा ॥  
 अत्यन्तविरतः स्वस्थः सर्ववासविवर्जितः ।  
 व्योमवत्तिष्ठ नीरागो राम कार्यपरोऽपि सन् ॥  
 यथैव कर्मकरणे कामना नास्ति धीमताम् ।  
 तथैव कर्मसंत्यागे कामना नास्ति धीमताम् ॥  
 गम्यदेशैकनिष्ठस्य यथा पान्यस्य पादयोः ।  
 स्पन्दो विगतसंकल्पस्तथा स्पन्दस्व कर्मसु ॥  
 स्पन्दस्वाकृतसंकल्पं सुखदुःखान्यभावयन् ।  
 प्रवाहपतिते कार्ये चेष्टितोन्मुक्तशण्णवत् ॥  
 महाकर्ता महाभोक्ता महात्यागी भवानघ ॥  
 रागद्वेषौ मुखं दुःखं धर्माधर्मौ फलफले ।  
 यः करोत्यनपेक्षेण महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 न किञ्चन द्वेष्टि तथा न किञ्चिदभिवाञ्छति ।  
 मुञ्चते च प्रकृतं सर्वं महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 सर्वेच्छाः सकलाः शङ्काः सर्वेहाः सर्वनिश्चयाः ।  
 धिया येन परित्यक्ता महात्यागी स उच्यते ॥



a gentleman who always acts in accordance with the prevalent moral notions, with the moral code (*Sastra*), with his own conscience, and with custom." (Vla, 121, 55.)<sup>1</sup> Vasiṣṭha expects every man whether he is ignorant or wise to be a gentleman.

<sup>1</sup> कर्तव्यमाचरन्काममकर्तव्यमनाचरन् ।

तिष्ठति प्रकृताचारो यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः ॥

यथाचारं यथाशास्त्रं यथाचित्तं यथास्थितम् ।

व्यवहारमुपादत्ते यः स आर्य इति स्मृतः ॥

## CHAPTER VII

## THE EXPERIENCE OF LIBERATION

THE experience of a state of existence when one feels above desires and passions, freed from all bonds of life, one with the all-inclusive Unity, seeing the Self within all and all within the Self, equanimous and balanced under all circumstances, in tune with the Absolute Whole in thought, emotion and action, a state professed to have been experienced by the so-called mystics of all ages and climes, must be blessed indeed. Even in ordinary moments of forgetfulness from the cares and anxieties of life we feel a unique joy, which ignorant people in vain try to perpetuate with the help of intoxicants. The peculiar joy of rising above the body, of mental harmony in which we forget even our own mind, of deep sleep in which the body and mind both are totally forgotten, is so fascinating that every one would like to perpetuate them. They only know who have ever experienced, how uniquely happy is that state of experience when one rises above his little self or ego in æsthetic contemplation, in moral fervour, in religious devotion, or in philosophic thinking. Immensely much more happy should be the experience of him who lives in the Absolute in which all particulars and individualities are harmonized and lost in a fashion we do not know until we rise to that level of experience. Till then we shall have to look up towards

those who have realized that state to hear what they say. Here we propose to learn how Vasiṣṭha has described the experience of that state of Liberation which to him was an actuality and to us only an ideal.

The signs of the dawn of mystic experience are described in the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha* in the following passages: "Thoughtful investigation into the nature of the Self having been made, the fluctuating movements of mind having been overcome, thinking having been transcended, the mind having been transmuted, the objectivity having been given up and neglected, the subject having been constantly attended to, vigilance into the realm of the Self and forgetfulness of the realm of the world being effected, complete withdrawal of interest and hope from the sensual pleasures through intense distaste for them being achieved, the knot of the heart (tendency to desire and imagine), which is the source of all worldly desires having been cut through *vairāgya* (distaste), the Self-experience, the very nature of us, dawns, *i.e.*, becomes clearly manifest in intuition, as water becomes clear of all dirt when the clearing nut (*kataka-phalam*) is put in it. Then, the mind becomes absolved of all desires, attachment, duality and dependence, and comes out of the darkness of delusion, like a lion from a cage. All the doubts, wonders and fears having been cast away, the mind, now fuller than the full, shines like a full moon. The fluctuations of the mind being now merged in peace, extremely glorious evenness, which knows no rise or fall is felt. The dark night of the tendency towards world-experience becomes weak, and the sun of the intuition of the Pure Consciousness rises. Wisdom born of purity begins to emanate all round, as beams from the moon, which pleases the world and enchants the heart.



The rise and fall, coming and going, of world-orbs which trouble the mind of the fool, do not touch the wise (now). Desires vanish like a mirage at the rise of discrimination." (IV, 22, 1-4, 7-14, 18, 21.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> जन्तोः कृतविचारस्य विगलदृष्टिचेतसः ।  
 मननं त्यजतो ज्ञात्वा किञ्चित्परिणतात्मनः ॥  
 दृश्यं संत्यजतो हेयमुपादेयमुपेयुषः ।  
 द्रष्टारं पश्यतो दृश्यमद्रष्टारमपश्यतः ॥  
 जागर्तक्ये परे तत्त्वे जागरूकस्य जीवतः ।  
 सुप्तस्य घनसंमोहमये संसारवर्त्मनि ॥  
 पर्यन्तात्यन्तवैराग्यात्सरसेष्वरसेष्वपि ।  
 भोगेष्वामोगरम्येषु विरक्तस्य निराशिषः ॥  
 संसारवासनाजाले खगजाल इवाबुना ।  
 श्रोतिते हृदयग्रन्थौ श्लथे वैराग्यरंहसा ॥  
 कातकं फलमासाद्य यथा वारि प्रसीदति ।  
 तथा विज्ञानवशतः स्वभावः संप्रसीदति ॥  
 नीरागं निरुपासङ्गं निर्द्वन्द्वं निरुपाश्रयम् ।  
 विनिर्वाति मनो मोहाद्विहगः पञ्चरादिव ॥  
 शान्ते संदेहदौरात्म्ये गतकौतुकविभ्रमम् ।  
 परिपूर्णान्तरं चेतः पूर्णेन्दुरिव राजते ॥  
 जनितोत्तमसौन्दर्या दूरादस्तमयोज्ज्वला ।  
 समतोदेति सर्वत्र शान्ते वात इवाणवे ॥  
 अन्धकारमयी मूका जाड्यजर्जरितान्तरा ।  
 तनुत्वमेति संसारवासनेवोदये क्षपा ॥  
 दृष्टचिद्भास्करा प्रज्ञा पद्मिनी पुण्यपल्लवा ।  
 विकसत्यमलोद्भवा प्रातर्दीरिव रूपिणी ॥  
 प्रज्ञा हृदयहारिण्यो भुवनाह्लादनक्षमाः ।  
 सत्त्वलब्धाः प्रवर्धन्ते सकलेन्दोरिवांशवः ॥  
 तद्भवदिमे लोकाः प्रयान्त्यायान्ति चेतसः ।  
 क्रोडीकुर्वन्ति चाङ्गं ते न ज्ञं मरणजन्मनी ॥  
 विवेक उदिते शीते मिथ्या भ्रममरुदिता ।  
 क्षीयते वासना साधे मृगतृण्या मराविव ॥

What is the experience of the Self? At which moments do we get a flash of the experience of the Reality in us? "The existence of the real nature of the Self is experienced in the interval of thoughtless existence between two ideas in the mind (*i.e.*, the experience of existence when one idea has passed away and another has not yet arisen in the mind). (III, 117, 8.) The experience of one's real nature is had when one is free from sleep and unconsciousness and also has no thought or imagination (III, 117, 9); when the feeling of ego or individuality and multiplicity of ideas is absent, yet the experience is a conscious experience." (III, 117, 10.)<sup>1</sup>

The experience of Self is in fact *sui generis*, unique. It cannot be described or compared to anything. Those who have realized it, find it very difficult to tell what it is like. It is only to be enjoyed in intuition, and not to be described. "The experience when the ego is totally merged is intensely happy. It is the fullness of existence. It is that for which one should strive. (V, 64, 47.) It is called the perfectly full ocean (of existence); or rather, It cannot be called anything at all. There is nothing that can be compared to It at all. (V, 64, 48.) The experience of the *Turiya* (the fourth state of existence), which is only a portion of Consciousness, may be to a certain extent compared

<sup>1</sup> अर्थादर्थान्तरं चित्ते याति मध्ये हि या स्थितिः ।

निरस्तमनना वाऽसौ स्वरूपस्थितिरुच्यते ॥

संशान्तसर्वसंकल्पा या शिलान्तरिव स्थितिः ।

जाड्यनिद्राविनिर्मुक्ता सा स्वरूपस्थितिः स्मृता ॥

अहंतांशे क्षते शान्ते भेदे निःस्पन्दतां गते ।

अजडा या प्रकचति तत्स्वरूपमिति स्थितम् ॥

to this full experience of the Self. (V, 64, 49.) In a very farfetched way, and with very little similarity between the two, the experience of sleep may be compared to It. (V, 64, 50.) The Divine Experience which has within It all things (potentially), and which is the highest Bliss; which dawns when individuality and mind are dissolved, and which is far from being an experience of sleep, is beyond the reach of sleep. It is realized through one's own application, and is to be experienced in one's own heart. (V, 64, 51-52.) As the taste of sweet cannot be known without actual sensation of it, so also the taste of this experience cannot be known without one's own intuition of it." (V, 64, 53.)<sup>1</sup> Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan has similarly described this experience—called Religious Experience by him—in his *An Idealist View of Life*: "It is a type of experience which is not clearly differentiated into a subject-object state,

<sup>1</sup> अहंकारे परिक्षीणे यावस्था सुखमोदजा ।

सावस्था भरिताकारा सा सेव्या संप्रयत्नतः ॥

परिपूर्णार्णवप्रख्या न वा गोचरमेति नः ।

नोपमानमुपादत्ते नानुचावति रञ्जनम् ॥

केवलं चित्प्रकाशाशकलिका स्थिरतां गता ।

तुषां चेत्प्राप्यते दृष्टिस्तत्तया सोपमीयते ॥

अदूरगतसादृश्यात्सुषुप्तस्योपलक्ष्यते ।

सावस्था भरिताकारा गगनश्रीरिवातता ॥

मनोहंकारविलये सर्वभावान्तरस्थिता ।

समुदेति परानन्दा या तनुः पारमेश्वरी ॥

सा स्वयं योगसंसिद्धा सुषुप्ता दूरभाविनी ।

न गम्या वचसां राम हृद्येवेहानुभूयते ॥

अनुभूतिं विना तत्त्वं खण्डादेर्नानुभूयते ।

अनुभूतिं विना रूपं नात्मनश्चानुभूयते ॥



an integral undivided consciousness in which not merely this or that side of man's nature but his whole being seems to find itself. It is a condition of consciousness in which feelings are fused, ideas melt into one another, boundaries broken and ordinary distinctions transcended. Past and present fade away into a sense of timeless being, consciousness and being are not there different from each other. All being is consciousness and all consciousness is being. Thought and reality coalesce and a creative merging of subject and object results. Life grows conscious of its incredible depths. In this fullness of felt life and freedom (*ananda*), the distinction of the knower and the known disappear. The privacy of the individual self is broken and invaded by a universal self which the individual feels as his own." (*An Idealist View of Life*, p. 91-92.) . . . The experience is itself felt to be sufficient and complete. It is sovereign in its own rights and carries its own credentials. It is self-established (*svataḥ-siddha*), self-evident (*sva-samvedya*), self-luminous (*svayam-prakāśa*). It does not argue or explain, but it knows and is. (*Ibid.*, p. 92.) . . . The tension of normal life disappears, giving rise to inward peace, power and joy. (*Ibid.*, p. 93.) . . . It transcends expression even while it provokes it. It is just what it is, and not like anything else. There is no experience by which we can limit it, no conception by which we can define it." (*Ibid.*, p. 96.)

One thing that can be said with certainty with regard to the experience of the liberated state is that the existence of the mind, individuality or ignorance is not at all felt in that experience. It is identity with the Absolute Experience and the actualization of the Absolute point of view, in which all multiplicity is dissolved into a harmonious Unity, the Ultimate ZERO (*Sanya*)

in which all affirmations and negations fuse together. "Having become one with the Absolute Reality, we do not know, where the mind is gone, and where are gone desires, actions, and the emotions of joy and grief. (VIb, 46, 1.) When the delusion of ignorance is over we do not at all experience the mind. (V, 81, 5.) When one has awakened in the Absolute Experience, he finds that the mind is dead, desire has vanished, the cage of delusion has been shattered into pieces, and the ego is absent." (V, 81, 9.)<sup>1</sup>

Once that Experience is tasted, there is no possibility of the return of ignorance again. It cannot be forgotten. Our stay in It becomes permanently fixed. "As a woman in love ever enjoys in her heart the pleasure of the company of her beloved, in spite of her remaining busy in household work, so also the wise one, who has once tasted the peace of the Absolute Experience, cannot be ever turned back from enjoying it even by all the gods including Indra. (V, 74, 83-84.) Ignorance, when once known to be ignorance, would not drag him from that experience. Even a thirsty man is not carried away by a mirage-river when he knows it to be so. (V, 74, 20.) *Avidya* (ignorance) vanishes the very moment it is recognized to be so." (V, 64, 13.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> परमार्थफले ज्ञाते मुक्तौ परिणति गते ।

बोधोऽप्यसद्वयलाशु परमार्थो मनोमृगः ॥

मौख्यमोहभ्रमे शान्ते चित्तं नोपलभामहे ॥

मृतं चित्तं गता तृष्णा प्रक्षीणो मोहपङ्कजः ।

निरहंकारता जाता जाग्रत्यस्मिन्प्रबुद्धवान् ॥

<sup>2</sup> परव्यसनिनी नारी व्यग्राऽपि गृहकमेणि ।

तदेवास्वादयन्तः परसङ्गरसायनम् ॥

एवं तत्त्वे परे शुद्धे धीरो विश्रान्तिमागतः ।

न शक्यते चालयितुं देवैरपि सवासवैः ॥

Such an experience, if it is really possible, and there are no *apriori* reasons to deny its possibility and to distrust those who have enjoyed it, must be the happiest possible state of existence. Vasiṣṭha thinks, as the authors of the *Upaniṣads* have thought, that there is no other kind of happiness in the universe which can stand equal to the happiness which a liberated man, enjoying the Absolute Experience, feels. He says: "I do not see anywhere in the world, on the earth, in the *Patala* (Nether regions) below and in the Heaven above, any pleasure or prosperity which is greater than Self-knowledge. (VIb, 143, 3.) The status of the knowers of the Self is so great that in comparison to it the prosperity of the king of Heaven is very insignificant." (VIb, 143, 2.)<sup>1</sup> There is no wonder, therefore, that we find those who are installed in that Experience exclaiming their feeling of freedom and joy in the following manner, which an ordinary man would hardly appreciate:<sup>2</sup>

अविद्या संपरिज्ञाता न चैनं परिकर्षति ।  
मृगानृग्या परिज्ञाता तर्षुलं नावकर्षति ॥  
अविद्या संपरिज्ञाता यदैव हि तदैव हि ।  
सा परिक्षीयते भूयः त्वमेनेव हि भोगभूः ॥

<sup>1</sup> पाताले भूतले स्वर्गे सुखमैश्वर्यमेव वा ।  
न तत्पश्यामि यन्नाम पाण्डित्यादतिरिच्यते ॥  
आत्मज्ञानविदो यान्ति यां गतिं गतिकोविदाः ।  
पाण्डितास्तत्र शक्रश्रीर्जरतृणलवायते ॥

<sup>2</sup> मोक्षमिच्छाम्यहं कस्माद्बद्धः केनास्मि वै पुरा ।  
अबद्धो मोक्षमिच्छामि केयं बालविडम्बना ॥  
न बन्धोऽस्ति न मोक्षोऽस्ति मौर्ख्यं मे क्षयमागतम् ।  
किं मे ध्यानविलासेन किं वा ध्यानेन मे भवेत् ॥



"Why should I desire Liberation? I am no longer bound, nor was I (really) ever bound by anybody before. It is foolish and childish to desire Liberation when I am not bound. (V, 29, 10.)

ध्यानाध्यानभ्रमौ त्यक्त्वा पुंस्त्वं स्वमवलोकयत् ।

यदायाति तदायातु न मे वृद्धिर्न वा क्षयः ॥

न मे वाञ्छा परे तत्त्वे न मे वाञ्छा जगत्स्थितौ ।

न मे ध्यानदशाकार्यं न कार्यं विभवेन मे ॥

नाहं मृतो न जीवामि न सत्तासन्न सन्मयः ।

नेदं मे नैव चान्यन्मे नमो मह्यमहं ब्रूहत् ॥

इदमस्तु जगद्राज्यं तिष्ठाम्यत्र तु संस्थितः ।

नेह वाऽस्तु जगद्राज्यं तिष्ठाम्यात्मनि शीतलः ॥

किं मे ध्यानदशा कार्यं किं राज्यविभवश्रिया ।

यदायाति तदायातु नाहं किंचन मे क्वचित् ॥

न किंचिदपि कर्तव्यं यदि नाम मयाऽधुना ।

तत्कस्मान्न करोमीदं किंचित्प्रकृतकर्म वै ॥

न मे भोगस्थितौ वाञ्छा न च भोगविवर्जने ।

अस्ति सर्वत्र मे स्वर्गो नियतो न तु कुत्रचित् ॥

यदायाति तदायातु यत्प्रयाति प्रयातु तत् ।

सुखेषु मम नापेक्षा नोपेक्षा दुःखवृत्तिषु ॥

सुखदुःखान्युपायान्तु यान्तु वाऽप्यहमेव कः ।

वासना विविधा देहे त्वस्तं चोदयमेव वा ॥

देहस्याहमहं देहीति शीघ्रे चित्तविभ्रमे ।

त्यजामि न त्यजामीति किं मुधा कलनोदिता ॥

प्राप्तानुत्तमविश्रान्तिर्लब्ध्वा लभ्यपरास्पदः ।

अनिवृत्तिपदं प्राप्तो मनसा कर्मणा गिरा ॥

सर्वत्रैव हि तुभ्यामि सर्वत्रैव रमे प्रभो ।

अवाञ्छन्तवान्मनसः सर्वत्रानन्दवानहम् ॥

इदं सुखमिदं नेति मिथुने क्षयमागते ।

सममेव पदे शान्ते तिष्ठामीह यथासुखम् ॥

"Their is neither bondage for me nor Liberation! My ignorance has come to an end. What is the use of practising meditation? What will happen, if I do not meditate at all? (V, 29, 11.)

"Give up the illusion of meditation, etc. Look within your Self. Let anything happen as it may; there is no loss or gain to me. (V, 29, 12.)

"I have no desire even for the Absolute Reality (as we do not desire what we have already got), nor for the world. I have nothing to do with meditation or with wealth and prosperity. (V, 29, 14.)

"I am neither dead nor living; neither being nor non-being; neither this nor that is mine. I am infinite. Salutations to me! (V, 29, 15.)

"Let there be an empire of the whole world to be ruled over by me, I have no objection. Let there be a loss of the empire to me, I do not mind, for it does not take away my peace. (V, 29, 16.)

"What have I to gain from meditation or from the prosperity of a kingdom? Let anything come or go. I am not anything, nor is anything mine. (V, 29, 17.)

"I have nothing to do now. Yet why should I not do that which is natural? (V, 29, 18.)

"I have no desire to enjoy pleasures, nor do I desire to give them up. (V, 35, 38.)

"My heaven is not in some definite place. It is everywhere. (VIa, 107, 26.)

"Let anything come to me if it is to come, and let anything go if it is to go from me. I do not mind pleasures, nor do I mind pains. (V, 35, 39.)

"Let pleasures or pains come and go. I am not eager for them. Let various desires arise or vanish in the body. (V, 35, 40.)

"When the idea that I am the owner of the body and that the body is mine is transcended, what meaning is there in the expression that I give this body up or do not give it up? (V, 40, 12.)

"I have attained the highest peace, I have attained the greatest attainable thing. I have obtained that state from which there is no return. (V, 74, 35.)

"I am happy everywhere. I enjoy everywhere. As I have no desire, there is Bliss for me everywhere. (VIa, 107, 27.)

"As both the ideas 'This is pleasing to me' and 'this is not pleasing to me' have been given up by me, I am always at peace and in evenness, and therefore happy everywhere." (VIa, 109, 70.)

*Vide*, for similar expressions the *Avadhūta Upaniṣad* and *Pañca-daśī*. (VII, 251-298.)



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CHARACTER OF THE LIBERATED LIVING MAN

WE are already familiar with Vasiṣṭha's conception of a liberated living man (*Jīvan-mukta*). He is the person who has realized the Absolute Experience, and has freed himself from the bond of *karmas*, and so his thoughts and actions no more promise a future world-experience for him. He is experiencing a world and individual existence apparently as a consequence of his previous desires and imagination. The thoughts and actions, after the moment of Self-realization, have become fried, as it were, in the fire of knowledge and their essence, *vāsana* (desire) which would have made them fructify into future world-experiences, is fully dried up. How does such a man live in the world? How does he behave in life which is the last for him? What is his attitude and conduct towards his fellow-beings? What is his attitude towards the physical body? How does he act, how does he enjoy, and how does he feel in life? These are some of the interesting questions which arise in this connection. In this chapter we propose to gather what Vasiṣṭha has said on these problems. We shall first study the character of the liberated living man in general and then under

particular aspects. The following is a general description of the character of the liberated living man :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> न मुखाय सुखं यस्य दुःखं दुःखाय यस्य नो ॥

सुखदुःखेषु भीमेषु संततेषु महत्स्वपि ।

मनागपि न वैरस्यं प्रयान्ति समदृष्टयः ॥

यस्य कस्मिंश्चिदप्यर्थे कचिद्रसिकताऽस्ति नो ।

व्यवहारवतोऽप्यन्तः स विश्रान्त उदाहृतः ॥

यस्य सर्वं समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ॥

नालम्बते रसिकतां न च नीरसतां कचित् ।

नार्थेषु विचरत्यर्थी वीतरागः सरागवत् ॥

उद्विजन्तेऽपि नो लोकालोकान्नेद्विजयन्ति च ॥

तेषां तनुत्वमायान्ति लोभमोहादयोऽरयः ॥

मनोज्ञमधुराचाराः प्रियपेशलवादिनः ॥

विवेचितारः कार्याणां निर्णेतारः क्षणादपि ॥

अनुद्वेगकराचारा बान्धवा नागरा इव ।

बहिः सर्वसमाचारा अन्तः सर्वार्थशीतलाः ॥

उपेक्षते न संप्राप्तं नाप्राप्तमभिवाञ्छति ।

सोमसौम्यो भवत्यन्तः शीतलः सर्ववृत्तिषु ॥

प्रवाहपतिते कार्ये कामसंकल्पवर्जितः ।

तिष्ठत्याकाशद्वयो यः स पण्डित उच्यते ॥

वर्णधर्माश्रमाचारशास्त्रयन्त्रणयोज्झितः ।

निर्गच्छति जगज्जालात्पञ्चरादिव केसरी ॥

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागी नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

न पुण्येन न पापेन लिप्यते नेतरेण च ॥

परानन्दरसाक्षुब्धो रमते स्वात्मनाऽऽत्मनि ॥

मुदिताद्याः श्रियो वक्त्रे न मुञ्चन्ति कदाचन ॥

न निन्दन्ति न नन्दन्ति जीवितं मरणं तथा ॥

केषुचिन्नानुवन्नाति तृप्तमूर्तिरसक्तधीः ॥

जीवन्मुक्तो गतासङ्गः सन्नाडात्मेव तिष्ठति ॥

परिपूर्णमना मानी मौनी शत्रुषु चाचलः ॥

“Pleasures do not delight him, pains do not distress. (VIb, 169, 1.) There is no feeling of like or dislike produced in his mind even in serious, violent and continued states of pleasure or pain. (VIb, 198, 27.) Although externally engaged in worldly actions, he has no particular attachment in his mind for any object

संपत्स्वाप्तु चोप्राप्तु रमणेषुत्सवेषु च ॥  
 विहरन्नपि नोद्वेगी नानन्दमुपगच्छति ।  
 न विभेति न वाऽऽदत्ते वैवश्यं न च दीनताम् ।  
 समः स्वस्थमना मौनी धीरस्तिष्ठति शैलवत् ॥  
 न तस्यार्थो नभोगत्या न सिद्धया न च भोगकैः ।  
 न प्रभावेण नो मानैर्नाशामरणजीवितैः ॥  
 अनुबन्धपरे जन्तावसंसक्तेन चेतसा ।  
 भक्ते भक्तसमाचारः शठे शठ इव स्थितः ॥  
 बालो बालेषु वृद्धे वृद्धो धीरु धैर्यवान् ।  
 युवा यौवनवृत्तेषु दुःखितेष्वनुदुःखितः ॥  
 न तस्य मुकृतेनार्थो न भोगैर्न च कर्मभिः ।  
 न दुष्कृतैर्न भोगानां संत्यागेन न बन्धुभिः ॥  
 सर्वं सर्वप्रकारेण गृह्णाति च जहाति च ।  
 अनुपादेयसर्वार्थो बालवच्च विचेष्टते ॥  
 स तिष्ठन्नपि कार्येषु देशकालक्रियाक्रमैः ।  
 न कार्यसुखदुःखाभ्यां मनागपि हि गृह्यते ॥  
 न कदाचन दीनात्मा नोद्धतात्मा कदाचन ।  
 न प्रमत्तो न खिन्नात्मा नोद्विग्नो न च हर्षवान् ॥  
 सर्वशत्रुषु मध्यस्थो दयादाक्षिण्यसंयुतः ।  
 इमं विश्वपरिस्पन्दं करोमीत्यस्तवासनम् ।  
 प्रवर्तते यः कार्येषु स मुक्त इति मे मतिः ॥  
 अनागतानां भोगानामवाञ्छनमकृत्रिमम् ।  
 आगतानां च संभोग इति पण्डितलक्षणम् ॥  
 यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो यस्य बुद्धिर्न लिप्यते ।



whatsoever. (VIb, 169, 8.) All his activities are free from desire and attachment. (VIb, 169, 9.) He has neither love for any object, nor hatred for it. He moves amongst worldly things, but not as one who is in need of them. Although outwardly not appearing so, he is at his heart above all cravings. (VIb, 102, 13.) He does not trouble anybody nor is he troubled by anybody. (VIb, 98, 2.) Evil qualities like covetousness and delusion lose their hold on him. (VIb, 98, 1.) He divines the heart of others and behaves with them agreeably, and talks sweetly and nobly. (VIb, 98, 3.) He exercises his judgment very swiftly and makes right choice between two courses of conduct. (VIb, 98, 4.) His conduct does not annoy any body; he behaves like a citizen and a friend of all. Outwardly he is very busy, but very calm and quiet at heart. (VIb, 98, 5.) He does not disregard what he gets, nor does he hanker after what he has not got. He is always

कुर्वतोऽकुर्वतो वाऽपि स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥

पुत्रदारसमप्राणि मित्राणि च धनानि च ।

जन्मान्तरकृतानीव स्वप्नजानीव पश्यति ॥

न स चेतयते काश्चिद्लोकदारधनैषणाः ।

अपूर्वपदविश्रान्तो जीवन्नेव यथा शवः ॥

हेयोपादेयकलने ममेत्यहमिहेति च ।

यस्यान्तः संपरिक्षीणे स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥

नोदेति नास्तमायाति सुखे दुःखे मुखप्रमा ।

यथाप्राप्तस्थितेर्यस्य जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

रागद्वेषभयादीनामनुरूपं चरन्नपि ।

योऽन्तर्व्योमवदच्छत्यः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥

यः समस्तार्थजातेषु व्यवहार्येषु शीतलः ।

पदार्थेष्वपि पूर्णात्मा स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥

at peace and undisturbed under all circumstances. (VIb, 45, 10.) He keeps himself engaged in the natural course of actions, in spite of his entirely being free from desires and wishes. And throughout his activities he remains untainted by them. (VIb, 22, 5.) Freed from the restrictions of caste, creed, stage of life (*āśrama*), custom and scriptures, he comes out of the net of the world as a lion from a cage. (VIa, 122, 2.) He rests unagitated in the Supreme Bliss. (VIa, 122, 4.) He does not work to attain any result for himself. He is ever happy, never hanging his joy on anything else. (VIa, 122, 5.) His face is never found without the beauty of cheerfulness on it. (VIa, 116, 3.) He neither welcomes life nor shuns death. (VIa, 12, 2.) He never binds himself to anything. He always looks satisfied. (V, 93, 35.) He lives as freely as a monarch. (V, 93, 24.) He is full-hearted, quiet and self-respecting. He remains undisturbed even in the midst of enemies. (V, 93, 39.) Even in the midst of great changes of prosperity and misery, or enjoying festivities, he neither experiences joy nor sorrow. (V, 93, 52-53.) He is never afraid, feels never helpless, or dejected. He remains firm and calm like a mountain. (V, 93, 55.) He has nothing to do with supernormal powers, enjoyments, influence or honour. He does not care for life or death. (V, 89, 18.) He behaves with other fellow beings as the occasion and (the status of) the person require, without the least stain in his mind. In the company of devotees he is like a devotee. To the knave he is a knave. (V, 77, 13.) He plays a child in the company of children; he is a youth among the young; he acts as an old man in the company of the aged ones. He is full of courage in the party of courageous people, and shares the misery of the miserable ones.



(V, 77, 14.) He has nothing to do with good acts, with sensual pleasures, with *karmas* or with renunciation of pleasures. (V, 77, 18.) There is nothing which he has to obtain. He therefore undertakes and gives up actions without much concern like children. (V, 77, 25.) In spite of being occupied with actions in accordance with time, place and circumstances, he is not touched by the pleasures or pain arising from them. (V, 77, 26.) He never feels despondent, proud, agitated, cast down, troubled or elated. (V, 77, 32.) In spite of being surrounded by enemies all around sometimes, he is full of mercy and magnanimity. (V, 18, 6.) He engages himself in actions thinking them to be cosmic movements (*visva-parispanda*) to be carried on without any personal desire. (V, 6, 1.) He does not hanker after the pleasures that are not in his hand, but enjoys all those he has. (IV, 46, 8.) He does not feel that he has done anything. His heart does not cling to his acts, whether he does them or not. (III, 9, 9.) He looks upon his wife, children, friends and wealth as the consequences of his desires of previous life, but now as dream-objects to him. (VIb, 45, 14.) Now he does not cherish any desire for the world, women and wealth, for he has attained unique satisfaction, and while living in the world, he is dead to it. (VIb, 45, 17.) The ideas of "I" and "mine", of something worthy of attainment and others of avoidance are lost within him. (V, 16, 20.) The lustre of his face never rises nor sets. It is uniformly present throughout, for he is ever satisfied with what he has. (III, 9, 6.) Although he seems to be acting (lit. acts) in accordance with like or dislike, fear, etc., yet within him he enjoys an emptiness like that of the sky. (III, 9, 8.) In spite of his being engaged in all things, he is cool-headed and full-minded." (III, 9, 13.) Compare the *Bhagavad-gita*.



(XII, 13-18.) Compare how Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan has described the mystics: "The mystic does not recognize any difference between the secular and the sacred. Nothing is to be rejected; everything is to be raised. . . . Feeling the unity of himself and the universe, the man who lives in spirit is no more a separate self-centred individual, but a vehicle of universal spirit. . . . He is able to face crisis in life with a mind full of serenity and joy. . . . They walk on thorns with a tread as light as air and stillness of mind sure of itself. (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *An Idealistic View of Life*, pp. 115-116.) These rare and precious souls, filled with the spirit of the whole, may be said to be world-conscious. They have the vision of the self in all existences and of all existences in the self. . . . Those who develop this large impersonality of the outlook delight in furthering the plan of the cosmos in doing the will of the Father. They are filled with love and friendliness to all humanity. We are called upon to love our enemies as ourselves, a rule more honoured with our lips than observed in our lives. To those dwelling in the spirit of God, it is the natural law of their being. They have an abiding realization of the secret oneness which is the basis of universal love. . . . It (love) lasts even the night is dark and the stars are hidden and man seems forsaken of all. It is the love that does not expect any reward, return or recompense. . . . They are . . . sovereigns over themselves. Theirs is a spontaneous growth and not a routine conformity. . . . They are not worried about the standardized conceptions of conduct. Naturally, the seers are free from dogmatism and breathe the spirit of large tolerance. . . . He continues to act without the sense of the ego. (*Ibid.*, p. 124.)

The liberated man has obtained all that was to be obtained by him, i.e., the Self. Now there remains nothing which he has to achieve or which he has to discard. There is nothing *heya* (to be avoided) or *upadeya* (to be obtained) for him now. And so he has nothing to do. Having nothing to do, he does everything that falls to his lot. Yet he keeps himself so free that he may give up any action at any time without the least affectation. All his actions, therefore, are free from binding effect upon him. "He, for whom the ideas of *heya* (avoidable) and *upadeya* (desirable) are meaningless, has nothing to do with giving up activity or taking resort to it. (VIb, 199, 2.) For the liberated one there is nothing here troublesome and so avoidable. Nor is there anything for him so attractive that he should make efforts to obtain it. (VIb, 199, 3.) No purpose of the wise man is served by any activity, nor by abstaining from activity. He, therefore, stays as occasion suits him. (VIb, 199, 4.) Even doing all sorts of actions, the liberated ones are always in *samādhi* (intense concentration on the Reality). (V, 62, 6.) An ordinary man acts only to obtain a thing which is not in his possession already, but when the wise man has become one with the Self other than whom nothing else exists anywhere, for what will he cherish any desire, what will he think of attaining, and so why should he engage himself in any purposive activity? (IV, 37, 10.) A desireless man would not, likewise, even desire inactivity." (IV, 37, 11.)<sup>1</sup> Similarly we find

<sup>1</sup> हेयोपादेयद्वयी द्वे यस्य शीणे हि तस्य वै ।

क्रियात्यागेन कोऽर्थः स्यात्क्रियासंश्रयणेन वा ॥

न तदस्तीह यस्यान्यं ज्ञस्योद्वेगकरं भवेत् ।

न वाऽस्ति यदुपादेयं तज्ज्ञसंश्रयतां गतम् ॥



in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "But the man who rejoices in the Self, with the Self is satisfied, and is content in the Self, for him verily there is nothing to do (III, 17); for him there is no interest in things done, in this world, nor any in things not done, nor does any object of his depend on any being." (III, 18.)

He is therefore not an idle man, nor is he an active man in the ordinary sense. He is a transcendental actor, a *mahā-kartā* (great doer). The conception of a *Mahā-kartā* is, according to Vasiṣṭha, the following: "He is a *mahā-kartā*, who acts, as occasion requires it, without any consideration whether his action is right or wrong according to the conventional standard (VIa, 115, 11); who acts without any anxiety, egoistic feeling, pride or impurity of heart (VIa, 115, 13); whose mind is not attached to good or bad acts, to right or wrong course of action (VIa, 115, 14); who indifferently engages himself in any activity or gives it up, and is uniformly calm at his heart in either case (VIa, 115, 18); who is in his temperament calm, and who never loses the balance of mind, and is never changed while engaged in actions good or bad (VIa, 115, 19); whose mind is uniformly the same in the circumstances of

इस्य नार्थः कर्मत्यागैर्नार्थः कर्मसमाश्रयैः ।

तेन स्थितं यथा यद्यत्तथैव करोत्यसौ ॥

नित्यं प्रबुद्धचित्तास्तु कुर्वन्तोऽपि जगत्क्रियाः ।

आत्मैकतत्त्वसंनिष्ठाः सदैव सुसमाधयः ॥

यस्मादात्मनो व्यतिरिक्ते वस्तुनि सिद्धे सति तत्रेच्छा प्रवर्तते । यत्र स्वात्मनो व्यतिरिक्तं न किञ्चिदपि संभवति तत्रात्मा किमिव वाञ्छन्तिकमनुस्मरन्वावतु किमुपेतु ॥

अत इदमीहितमिदमनीहितमित्यात्मानं न स्पृशन्ति विकल्पाः । अतो निरिच्छता-यामात्मा न किञ्चिदपि करोति कर्तृकरणकर्मणामेकत्वात् ॥



origin, existence, and decay, or rise and fall of anything around him." (VIa, 115, 20.)<sup>1</sup>

The bustle and activity of the world in which he might be engaged, or in the midst of which he might be living are not at all any source of disturbance or annoyance to the liberated man. Even while intensely busy in worldly activities, he is in *samādhi*. He is equally at peace whether he is living in the solitude of a forest or in his home with a big family around him. "There is no difference between the enlightened one who resides in a forest and one who is actively engaged in the world. Both are equally Self-realized. (V, 56, 12.) The mind of the latter is free from action in spite of its activity, as there is hardly any desire in it. The activity of such a man is like the listening of a man to a lecture when his mind is absent. (V, 56, 13.) The freedom of mind from activity is the best *samādhi* (concentration on the Self). (V, 56, 15.) The home itself of those householders whose mind is set fully on the Self, and who are free from the evils consequent on ego, is a

<sup>1</sup> धर्माधर्मौ महाभाग शङ्काविरहिताशयः ।  
 यः करोति यथाप्राप्तौ महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 मौनवन्निरहंभावो निर्मलो मुक्तमत्सरः ।  
 यः करोति गतोद्वेगं महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 शुभाशुभेषु कार्येषु धर्माधर्मौ कुशङ्कया ।  
 मतिर्न लिप्यते यस्य महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 उदासीनः कर्तृतां च कर्माकर्माचरंश्च यः ।  
 समं यात्यन्तरत्यन्तं महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 स्वभावेनैव यः शान्तः समतां न जहाति वै ।  
 शुभाशुभं ह्याचरन्त्यो महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 जन्मस्थितिबिनाशेषु सोदयास्तमयेषु च ।  
 सममेव मनो यस्य महाकर्ता स उच्यते ॥

solitary forest. (V, 56, 22.) For such people forest and home are equally the same. (V, 56, 23.) He is ever in *samādhi* who always looks upon the Self either as beyond all affirmations or immanent in all affirmations. (V, 56, 27.) He is in *samādhi* who sees the Self in all things, and so is ever in peace of mind, neither thinking of anything else nor anxious for it. (V, 56, 44.) Such a man who has become free from attachment to objectivity, and whose mind has become highly purified, does not become anything, does not do anything, is not defiled by anything like gold in mud, whether he stays at his home in the midst of all kinds of pleasures and surrounded by a big family, or he retires into a big forest where no object of enjoyment is near by, or even if he dances intoxicated with wine and is mad in love, or when he goes to and lives on a mountain having given up all; whether he besmears his body with all kinds of fragrant pastes, or enters into fire; whether he commits horrible sins, or highly virtuous acts are performed by him; whether he dies today or after millions of years." (V, 56, 51-56.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> व्यवहारी प्रबुद्धो यः प्रबुद्धो यो वने स्थितः ।

द्वावेतौ सुसमौ नूनमसंदेहं पदं गतौ ॥

अकर्तुं कुर्वदप्येतच्चेतः प्रतनुवासनम् ।

दूरगतमना जन्तुः कथासंश्रवणे यथा ॥

चेतसो यदकर्तृत्वं तत्समाधानमुत्तमम् ।

तं विद्धि केवलीभावं सा शुभा निवृत्तिः परा ॥

गृहमेव गृहस्थानां सुसमाहितचेतसाम् ।

शान्ताहंकृतिदोषाणां विजना वनभूमयः ॥

अरण्यसदने तुल्ये समाहितमनोदृशाम् ॥

सर्वभावपदातीतं सर्वभावात्मकं च वा ।

The liberated one is not in need of running away from the pleasures of the world, nor does he run after them. He enjoys all pleasures that fall to his share, and craves for none that are away from him. He is not a cynic, he is not a puritan, he is not an ascetic; nor is he a pleasure-seeker, a man whose happiness hangs on the enjoyment of any pleasure, a passionate lover of enjoyments. He is something above and different from both these types. He is a transcendental enjoyer of all kinds of pleasures as well as the consequent pains. "All the pleasures of the world are to be enjoyed as the ocean enjoys the rivers running into it. They should neither be desired nor shunned, but should be enjoyed as they themselves fall to our share in accordance with our fate. (VIa, 39, 51.) The wise man enjoys all the pleasures that come to him without

यः पश्यति सदात्मानं स समाहित उच्यते ॥  
 यः सर्वगतमात्मानं पश्यन्समुपशान्तधीः ।  
 न शोचति ध्यायति वा स समाहित उच्यते ॥  
 ईदृशाशयसंपन्नो महासत्त्वपदं गतः ।  
 तिष्ठतूदेतु वा यातु मृतिमेतु न तत्स्थितिम् ॥  
 वसतूत्तमभोगाद्व्ये स्वगृहे वा जनाकुले ।  
 सर्वभोगोज्झिताभोगे सुमहल्यथ वा वने ॥  
 उद्दाममन्मथं पानतत्परो वाऽपि नृत्यतु ।  
 सर्वसङ्गपरित्यागी सममायातु वा गिरौ ॥  
 चन्दनागुस्कर्पूरैर्वपुर्वा परिलिम्पतु ।  
 ज्वालाजटिलविस्तारे निपतत्वथ वाऽनले ॥  
 पापं करोतु सुमहद्बहुलं पुण्यमेव च ।  
 अद्य वा मृतिमायातु कल्पान्तनिचयेन वा ॥  
 नासौ किञ्चन तर्कचित्कृतं तेन महात्मना ।  
 नासौ कलङ्कमाप्नोति हेम पङ्कगतं यथा ॥



any effort for them on his part, in a sportful and detached manner, in the same manner as the eyes enjoy a scene before them. (V, 74, 63.) The wise man is not pleased or displeased while enjoying the pleasures of life that accidentally (i.e., unsought) fall to his lot. (V, 74, 64.) It is a peculiar trait of the wise man that he does not desire the pleasures that he has not got, nor does he discard from enjoyment the pleasures that he has. He enjoys what he has." (IV, 46, 8.)<sup>1</sup> The liberated one, according to Vasiṣṭha is, therefore, a *maha-bhokta* (great enjoyer). "He is called a *mahā-bhokta* who does not shun anything, nor hankers after anything, but enjoys all that is natural (VIa, 115, 21); who remains looking upon the activities of life as an impartial witness, without attachment or desire (VIa, 115, 23); who, even enjoying anything, does not enjoy it (in the same way as others enjoy it) (VIb, 115, 22); who finds equal pleasure in old age, death, misery, poverty and ruling over an empire (VIa, 115, 25); who receives equally all great pains or pleasures like all waters received by the ocean (VIa, 115, 26); who eats with equal gusto the eatables of all tastes (sweet, bitter, etc.), of ordinary or superior quality (VIa, 115, 28); to whom everything is equally good whether it is tasteful or

<sup>1</sup> न वाञ्छता न त्यक्ता देवप्राप्ताः स्वभावतः ।

सरितः सागरेणेव भोक्तव्या भोगभूमयः ॥

अयन्नापनन्तं सर्वं लीलयाऽसक्तमानसः ।

मुहुक्ते भोगभरं प्राङ्मस्त्वालोकमिव लोचनम् ॥

काक्तालीपवत्प्राप्ता भोगाली ललनादिका ।

स्वादित्वाऽप्यङ्गं धीरस्य न दुःखाय न तुष्टये ॥

अनागतानां भोगानामवाञ्छन्मकृत्रिमम् ।

आगतानां च संभोग इति पण्डितलक्षणम् ॥

tasteless, extremely pleasant or unpleasant (VIa, 115, 29); and who enjoys with uniform mind all prosperity and misery, the pleasures of the world or those beyond it, and even a delusion." (VIa, 115, 32.)<sup>1</sup>

The liberated one is not an ascetic who would torture his physical body. The body is not an evil or an enemy to the wise man. It is a production of his previous willing (*samkalpa*) and will continue to exist as long as the force of the *samkalpa* is not exhausted. It is not anything imposed on him from without. There is no war between the body and the spirit in his case. It is no longer something that limits his Consciousness. Now it is rather a temple of Divinity. The wise man has got control over all its functions, because he has got control over his mind and consequently over his vital currents (*prāṇas*) and sense-organs. The body is now a kingdom to him over which

१ न किञ्चन द्वेष्टि तथा न किञ्चिदभिकाङ्क्षति ।  
 मुङ्क्ते च प्रकृतं सर्वं महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 साक्षिवत्सकलं लोकव्यवहारमखिन्नीः ।  
 पश्यत्यपगतेच्छं यो महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 मुञ्चानोऽपि न यो मुङ्क्ते महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 जरा मरणमापन्नं राज्यं दारिद्र्यमेव च ।  
 रम्यमित्येव यो वेत्ति महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 महान्ति सुखदुःखानि यः पयांसीव सागरः ।  
 समं समुपगृह्णाति महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 कटुम्ललवणं तिक्तममृष्टं मृष्टमुत्तमम् ।  
 अधमं योऽस्ति साम्येन महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 सरसं नीरसं चैव सुरतं विरतं तथा ।  
 यः पश्यति समं सौम्यो महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥  
 आपदं संपदं मोहमानन्दमपरं परम् ।  
 यो मुङ्क्ते समया बुद्ध्या महाभोक्ता स उच्यते ॥

he rules without any danger of disobedience or revolt from any side in it. The wise man rules over the kingdom of his body in the same detached manner as he would rule over an empire. He enjoys his body in the same manner as he would enjoy anything else. He does not make his body abstain from its natural functions; but allows them legitimately free scope. He does not paralyse any of the natural instincts of his body for want of proper exercise. For he knows that he does not gain anything in doing that. Nor has he to gain anything from the bodily functions or pleasures. Thus: "He who has attained the highest state of experience, is not at all affected when he is ruling over the city of his body, as a man riding on a machine. (IV, 23, 1.) The body does not cause him any pain. It is for him an organ of freedom and enjoyment (*bhoga*). For the wise man his body is a pleasure garden. (IV, 23, 2.) The body is a source of innumerable pains and sufferings to the ignorant only. But for the wise it is a means of all kinds of enjoyments and pleasures. (IV, 23, 18.) To the wise the body is always a source of pleasure. It is to him what *Amarāvati* (the city of gods) is to Indra. (IV, 23, 29.) The wise man never obstructs his senses from enjoying what is present before him, nor does he provide for them what he has not got yet. (IV, 23, 45.) They are not philosophers but fools, who do not allow their organs of action to go on with their proper functions, themselves remaining calm at heart. (VIa, 104, 40.) It is only the foolish and ignorant who run away forcibly from the natural functions of their body. (VIa, 104, 41.) As long as sesamum-seed exists, so long is its oil in it; in the same way as long as the body exists, it must have its natural functions. He, who does not allow the body to



have the exercise of its proper functions, cuts the sky with a sword, in which he cannot succeed. (VIa, 104, 42.) The proper way of escaping from the physical functions of the body is not through mortifying the senses, but through raising one's mind above the body into a state of evenness acquired by *Yoga*. (VIa, 104, 43.) It is desirable that, as long as the body lasts, one should undergo all natural and proper states of the body physically, but not mentally. (VIa, 104, 44.) There is no harm in doing all that is natural." (VIa, 106, 6.)<sup>1</sup>

१ य उत्तमपदालम्बी चक्रभ्रमवदास्थितः ।  
 शरीरनगरीराज्यं कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥  
 तस्येयं भोगमोक्षार्थं तज्ज्ञस्योपवनोपमा ।  
 सुखायैव न दुःखाय स्वशरीरमहापुरी ॥  
 अज्ञस्येयमनन्तानां दुःखानां कोशमालिका ।  
 ज्ञस्य त्वियमनन्तानां सुखानां कोशमालिका ॥  
 सुखावहेषा नगरी नित्यं वै विदितात्मनः ।  
 भोगमोक्षप्रदा चैषा शक्रस्येवामरावती ॥  
 इन्द्रियाणां न हरति प्राप्तमर्थं कदाचन ।  
 नाददाति तथाऽप्राप्तं संवृणो ज्ञोऽवतिष्ठते ॥  
 यावदेहमवस्थासु समचित्ततयैव ये ।  
 कर्मेन्द्रियैर्न तिष्ठन्ति न ते तत्त्वविदः शठाः ॥  
 ये ह्यतत्त्वविदो मूढा राजन्वालयैव ते ।  
 अवस्थाभ्यः पलायन्ते गृहीताभ्यः स्वभावतः ॥  
 यावत्तिलं यथा तैलं यावदेहं तथा दशा ।  
 यो न देहदशमेति स च्छिन्नस्थसिनाऽम्बरम् ॥  
 एष देहदशादुःखपरित्यागो ह्यनुत्तमः ।  
 यत्साम्यं चेतसो योगान्न तु कर्मेन्द्रियस्थितेः ॥  
 यावदेहं यथाचारं दशास्वङ्गं विजानता ।  
 कर्मेन्द्रियैर्हि स्थातव्यं न तु बुद्धीन्द्रियैः क्वचित् ॥  
 प्रकृतं कुर्वतः कार्यं दोषः क इव जायते ॥

In fact, there is no difference between the external conduct of wise man and that of an ordinary man. The difference does not lie between the activities of life (*vyavahāra*); it lies in the mentality of the two, in their attitude towards the activities in which they are engaged in apparently the same manner. "In the activities of life, the liberated one is the same as the ignorant. The difference, however, consists in the pre-sense of desire in the cause of the latter which is totally absent in the former. (IV, 15, 37.) The wise ones, who are free from clinging to the states of the body, externally appear to undergo the pleasures and pains of the body in accordance with the states of the body, in the same way as the ignorant man does." (IV, 15, 38.)<sup>1</sup> The whole difference is mental.

The mind of a liberated man is not a mind in the ordinary sense. The emotions of a liberated man are also different from the emotions of ordinary people. Even if the liberated man seems to have some desires, they are not desires (that bind), really speaking. They are automatic and reflex activities. They do not originate from the deeper layer of his ego or individuality. They have no warmth of feeling. They will, therefore, not bind him. "The ignorant mind is really called mind. The enlightened mind is called *sattvam* (being). Mind experiences another birth, but the *sattva* will not. (VIa, 103, 31-32.) The mind of knowers of the Self comes to utter negation. It is transmuted into the *turya* (fourth state of experience). It has melted as ice

<sup>1</sup> व्यवहारे यथैवाहस्तथैवाखिलपण्डितः ।

वासनामात्रभेदोऽत्र कारणं बन्धमोक्षदम् ॥

यावच्छरीरं तावद्धि दुःखे दुःखं सुखे सुखम् ।

असंसक्तधियो धीरा दर्शयन्त्यप्रबुद्धवत् ॥

melts in heat. (IV, 38, 9.) The desire in the liberated ones is called *sattva*. (VIa, 2, 43.) It has not to fructify into any future experience, like a fried seed." (V, 42, 14.)<sup>1</sup> According to the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* also the desires of a man of Self-realization do not promise a future existence as in the case of an ordinary man: "He, who broods on and longs for objects of desire, is born according to his desires. But in the case of one who has realized the Self and so has attained all his desires (finally), the desires end here in this life." (III, 2, 2 of *M.U.*)

Liberation, says Vasiṣṭha, should not be confused with the attainment of supernormal powers. The liberated man has nothing to do with them. He may possess them or may not. The supernormal powers, as we have already seen, can be obtained by any one who applies himself to attain them, whether he is a liberated man or not liberated one. Their possession is not a mark of liberation, nor does liberation necessarily lead to such powers. "The supernormal powers like flying in the sky, etc., can be attained through appropriate means and efforts, by any man whether he is a knower of the Reality or not. (V, 89, 16.) But he who has realized the Self, and has become free from desire is above such ideas. He has nothing to do with flying in

<sup>1</sup> मूढं चित्तं चित्तमाहुः प्रबुद्धं सत्त्वमुच्यते ।

भूयः प्रजायते चित्तं सत्त्वं भूयो न जायते ॥

आत्मविदां हि तन्मनः परमुपशममागतं मृगतृष्णाजलमिव वर्पति जलदे हिमकण  
इव चण्डातपे विलीनं तुर्यदशामुपागतं स्थितम् ॥

जीवन्मुक्तशरीरेषु वासना व्यवहारिणी ।

न चित्तनाम्नी भवति सा हि सत्त्वपदं गता ॥

भृष्टबीजोपमा भूयो जन्माङ्कुरविवर्जिता ।



the air, with powers, pleasures, influence, honour, life or death. (V, 89, 18.) If a realized man also wishes to have any supernormal power, he too can have them through proper methods." (V, 89, 23.)<sup>1</sup>

James Allen, an English writer of fame, says: "The Kingdom of Heaven being established in the heart, the obtaining of the material necessities of life is no more considered, for, having found the Highest, all these things are added as effects to cause; the struggle for existence has ceased and the spiritual, mental and material needs are daily supplied from the Universal Abundance." (*A Book of Meditations*, May 22.) Similarly Vasiṣṭha thinks with regard to the prosperity and protection of the liberated living man. "Him who puts on the world a value equal to that of a straw, all miseries leave as snakes leave their old skin (slough). (IV, 32, 37-38.) Him, from whose heart emanates purity all around, the guardian-angels of the world (*Lokesas*) protect and support as they do the entire Cosmos. (IV, 32, 38-39.) He, who does not seek anything particular, gets the Self and everything in perfection and entirety." (V, 34, 76.)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> तत्त्वज्ञो वाऽप्यतत्त्वज्ञो यः कालद्रव्यकर्मभिः ।

यथाक्रमं प्रयतते तस्योर्ध्वत्वादि सिध्यति ॥

न तस्यार्थो नमोगत्या न सिद्धया न च भोगैः ।

न प्रभावेण नो मानैर्नाशमरणजीवितैः ॥

यस्तु वा भावितात्माऽपि सिद्धिजालानि वान्छति ।

स सिद्धिसाधकैर्द्रव्यैस्तानि साधयति क्रमात् ॥

<sup>2</sup> वेत्ति नित्यमुदारात्मा त्रैलोक्यमपि यस्तृणम् ॥

तं त्यजन्त्यापदः सर्वाः सर्पा इव जरत्त्वचम् ॥

परिस्फुरति यस्यान्तर्नित्यं सत्त्वचमत्कृतिः ॥

ब्राह्मण्डमिवाखण्डं लोकेशः पालयन्ति तम् ॥

न किञ्चिदेन संप्राप्तं तेनेदं परमामृतम् ।

संप्राप्यान्तः प्रपूर्णेन सर्वं प्राप्तमक्षिप्तम् ॥

In IX, 22 of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa also says that He Himself looks after the worldly needs of His devotees.

In fact, this life, the life of Liberation, is the real life. It is the best way of living. It is the happiest life on the earth. "His life is really the beautiful and happiest life, whose mind never gives up the vision of reality; who sees things rightly (V, 39, 46); who never feels that he has done anything; whose mind is never attached to anything; who is even under all circumstances (V, 39, 47); who looks upon the world with the eye of a witness, free from likes or dislikes, and at peace in the heart (V, 39, 48); who has directed his mind within, after having come to know everything rightly, and having given up all ideas of desirable and avoidable (V, 39, 49); who, having acquired the standpoint of Truth, sportfully performs all worldly actions, although he has no desire for them (V, 39, 50); who, moving in the world, is neither annoyed nor elated (V, 39, 52); from whom good qualities emanate all around, as white swans fly all around from a pure lake (V, 39, 53); having seen whom, having heard about whom, having met with whom, and having remembered whom all creatures feel joy. (V, 39, 54.) As the beauty of a tree increases immensely in the spring season, so also the strength, the intellect and the lustre or beauty of a man increases when he knows the Truth. (V, 76, 20.) All enjoyments of life multiply in proportion with the increase of detachment, as trees multiply in the rainy season." (V, 68, 49.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> यस्य नोत्क्रामति मतिः स्वात्मतत्त्वावलोकनात् ।

यद्यार्थदर्शिनो ब्रह्मस्य जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

यः समः सर्वभावेषु जीवितं तस्य राजते ॥

Having lived this kind of free, active, peaceful and happy earthly life as long as the physical body lasted, the liberated individual acquires the status of "Disembodied Freedom" (*videha-mukti*), after the death of the physical body. Now he is not bound to be reborn. He enjoys conscious identity with the Absolute in a bodiless existence, and as such, he is the *Brahman*. So Vasiṣṭha says: "As a gust of wind enters the motionless air, so, after the physical body has been overtaken by death, the liberated person enters the state of disembodied Liberation. The disembodied liberated knows no rising nor setting nor extinction. He is neither being nor non-being; neither self nor not-self. He is not far off from anything. This state is called *Mukti*, *Brahman* and *Nirvāṇa*. It is the most Perfect state of

योऽन्तः शीतलया बुद्ध्या रागद्वेषविमुक्तया ।

साक्षिवत्पश्यतीदं हि जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

येन सम्यक्परिज्ञाय हेयोपादेयमुज्जता ।

चित्तस्यान्तेऽर्पितं चित्तं जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

अवस्तुसदृशे वस्तुन्यसक्तं कलनामले ।

येन लीनं कृतं चेतो जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

नान्तस्तुष्यति नोद्वेगमेति यो विहरन्नपि ।

शुद्धपक्षस्य शुद्धस्य हंसैवः सरसो यथा ।

यस्माद्गुणौघो निर्याति जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

यस्मिञ्श्रुतिपथं प्राप्ते दृष्टे स्मृतिमुपागते ।

आनन्दं यान्ति भूतानि जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥

बलं बुद्धिश्च तेजश्च दृष्टतत्त्वस्य वर्धते ।

सर्वसन्तस्य वृक्षस्य सौन्दर्याद्या गुणा इव ॥

असंसङ्गेन भोगानां सर्वा राम विभूतयः ।

परं विस्तारमायान्ति प्राकृषीव महापगाः ॥



Existence." (III, 9, 14-15, 25, 49.)<sup>1</sup> A question now may arise: Does the disembodied freed person totally cease to be an individual or does he continue to exist as such? According to the *Advaita-vāda* of Śaṅkara, which is based on the Upaniṣads, there occurs total mergence of the liberated individual into the Absolute Brahman after the death of the physical body. Vasiṣṭha, on the other hand does not regard total mergence as a necessary mark of Liberation or *Nirvāṇa*. The kernel of Liberation according to him is *conscious realization of complete oneness with the Brahman*. It makes little difference whether this occurs in an embodied state or in a disembodied one. (II, 4, 5)<sup>2</sup> It is not necessary or compulsory that the liberated individual should totally cease to continue as an individual. He may or may not do so. Some freed sages continue to exist as individuals, of their own accord, and take part in the Cosmic activities, disseminate knowledge and help other individuals in working out their Liberation. Vasiṣṭha, Kṛṣṇa and Buddha are some examples. Speaking about the disembodied sage, therefore, Vasiṣṭha says: "Having become a Brahmā, he creates the three worlds; having become a Viṣṇu, he protects them; having become a Rudra, he destroys them; having become a Sun, he supplies heat to them. Having become Space, he holds

<sup>1</sup> जीवन्मुक्तपदं त्यक्त्वा देहे कालवशीकृते ।

विशत्यदेहमुक्तत्वं पवनोऽस्पन्दतामिव ॥

विदेहमुक्तो नोदेति नास्तमेति न शाम्यति ।

न सन्नासन्न दूरस्थो न चाहं न च नेतरः ॥

मुक्तिरेषोच्यते राम ब्रह्मेतत्समुद्राद्वत् ॥

निर्वाणमेतत्कथितं पूर्णोत्पूर्णतराकृति ॥

<sup>2</sup> न मनागपि भेदोऽस्ति सदेहादेहमुक्तयोः ॥

the atmosphere with all the gods, demons and sages within it; having become the Earth, he supports the creatures; having become Flora, he supplies fruits to all beings; having become Fire, he burns; having become Water, he flows quickly; having become a Moon, he scatters nectar; having become Poison, he kills; having become the Ocean, he surrounds the earth; and having become the Greatest Sun, he illuminates steadily all the worlds and particles composing it." (III, 9, 16-22.)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> सूर्यो भूत्वा प्रतपति विश्वः पाति जगत्त्रयम् ।  
 रुद्रः सर्वान्संहरति सर्गान्सृजति पद्मजः ॥  
 खं भूत्वा पवनस्कन्धं धत्ते सर्षिमुरासुरम् ।  
 भूमिर्भूत्वा विभर्तामां लोकस्थितिमखण्डितम् ॥  
 तृणगुल्मलता भूत्वा ददाति फलसंततिम् ।  
 विभ्रज्जलानलाकारं ज्वलति द्रवति द्रुतम् ॥  
 चन्द्रोऽमृतं प्रसवति मृतं हालाहलं विषम् ।  
 भूत्वाऽर्णवो वलयति भूस्त्रियं वलयो यथा ॥  
 परमार्कवपुर्भूत्वा प्रकाशान्तं विसारयन् ।  
 त्रिजगत्त्रसरेण्वोचं शान्तमेवावतिष्ठते ॥





PART IV

RECAPITULATION AND REVIEW



## CHAPTER I

### THE SALIENT POINTS OF VASIṢṬHA'S PHILOSOPHY

IN the preceding parts we have tried to present the details of Vasiṣṭha's philosophy in a systematic and coherent manner, the absence of which is a serious defect of the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha*, elucidating them here and there and pointing out similarities in the thoughts of other thinkers, ancient and modern, Indian and Western. We now propose to have a general survey and review of this philosophy.

The following are the salient features of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha :

(1) Life, as it is usually lived by the ignorant, is full of misery and suffering. It is a profitless business in which not a farthing of real and lasting happiness is obtained. It is characterized by perpetual change, death, deception and imperfection at every step. There is a craving in us, however, not only to escape from misery, change, death, ignorance and imperfection, but also to be happy, perfect and wise. When this craving is strong, mind is ripe for appreciating and understanding Philosophy. Compare what Kulpe says : "Whenever the external and internal worlds in which the individual is obliged to pass his life leave him dissatisfied, because things are of this complexion or are not



of that, there arises a desire for a more ideal existence such as can best be pictured by the help of a new theory of the Universe." (Kulpe: *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 28.)

(2) Ignorance or the lack of the knowledge of the nature of the Self and of the world is the root cause of all our sufferings and troubles. Almost all Indian philosophers are agreed on this point.

(3) There is nothing like fate making us miserable or happy in spite of ourselves. We are the makers of our destiny by our own efforts. Fate is another name of our previous efforts resulting in good or bad consequences, which again can be changed through fresh stronger efforts. One should therefore never give in to the evils of life, and should always make efforts to conquer them. Vasiṣṭha is neither a pessimist nor an optimist, but a *meliorist*. He believes in self-determinism in the fullest sense of the term.

(4) Direct Cognition is the ultimate source of all our knowledge. There is no other means of knowing anything rightly.

(5) The dualism of subject and object, the two factors distinguishable in our experience, is not an ultimate fact, as the Sāṃkhya philosophers in India and Descartes in the West thought. The relation of knowledge between the subject and the object presupposes a deeper Unity between the two, which in Itself must be transcending the distinction, yet manifesting Itself in the duality or plurality of subjects and objects. This epistemological argument is advanced by the Absolutists of the West also. But Kulpe has remarked that "Epistemology is not competent to decide upon the existence of a conceptually necessary reality." (*Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 203.) In reply to this the Absolutist

of the West may say in the words of Bradley: "What is possible, and what a general principle compels us to say *must be*, that certainly *is*" (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 196), but Vasiṣṭha would surely say, "I know it directly to be *existing*, and every one can experience it, if he aspires to do so."

(6) There is no essential difference in the nature of the contents of dream, imagination or waking experience. All these are of the same nature, and are felt to be so when they are being experienced. All contents of experience, of whatever kind it may be, may be termed as ideas, and we might say, nay, it is a fact realized to be true in higher experience, that the objective world is an ideal construction of the mind, is a work of mentation like the world of dream, and has no existence apart from the mind. The authors of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, *Mahayāna-sraddhot-pāda-sāstra* (As'va-ghoṣa), *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, *Vākya-pāṇīya*, *Maṇḍukya-kārikās*, *Viveka-cūḍa-maṇi* and *Vedānta-muktāvalī*, are all in agreement on this doctrine which seems to have been controverted by Sāṃkhya in his *Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras* (II, 2, 28-32), following the author of the *Sūtras*.

(7) The extension of space, duration of time, and the mass of bodies are also subjective ideas and are relative to the experiencing individuals. This doctrine is very much similar to what has now been to a great extent scientifically demonstrated by Einstein.

(8) Although the world of waking experience is an ideal construction in every mind, in exactly the same way as the worlds of dream are, yet most of the contents of this world are shared in common by many individuals. This is due to either of the two reasons: it is possible that identically the same ideas may be



represented in more than one mind, or because over and above those individuals who have the vision of a common objective world, there exists a common mind, the Cosmic Mind, in which all the common contents of the world as well as the individuals themselves exist as ideas, and are represented in every individual mind within the Cosmic Mind. This view may be fairly compared with Berkeley's Idealism, according to whom the world exists as an ideal construction in the mind of God and is represented in every finite mind, and also to Leibnitz's conception of a "Pre-established Harmony" and of a Divine Monad within whom all the monads and the entire universe are clearly represented.

(9) The terms cosmic and individual are to be understood only in a relative sense. That which is considered as an individual in relation to a wider cosmic mind and its contents which include the individual as well, may in its own turn be considered as cosmic in relation to the entities within its own objective experience. For, according to Vasiṣṭha every objective has a subjective aspect, *i.e.*, is a mind in which is represented a world peculiar to itself, as in dream. Every idea is a monad in itself and has an entire world within it, every ideal content of which is again in its turn an individual monad having another world within itself. There is no end to this process of worlds within worlds. This doctrine of Vasiṣṭha which is alleged to be a matter of experience to him, can be grasped on the analogy of dream and by a close and comparative study of the philosophy of Leibnitz, Fawcett and Fechner.

(10) The manifestation of an objective world within a mind proceeds by way of exfoliation, *i.e.*, externalization of ideas in the form of things, body and senses,



consequent upon the craving or wish to enjoy particular objects, the process of which can be studied in the phenomenon of dreams, for the law of evolution of an objective world is the same in the case of a dream, of an after-death vision, or of the rise of a cosmos. The dynamic force behind all manifestation of objects in one's experience is the craving, desire or will to be something, or to have something, which the creative imagination forthwith supplies in the form of an object. The evolutionary process, therefore, does not, in the cosmos, proceed blindly as Darwin and Haeckel have thought, but as the realization of a Cosmic Will as Schopenhauer suggests and Lamarck works out. Vasiṣṭha accounts for the so-called real world on the same principle on which Freud accounts for the occurrence of dreams, *i.e.*, desire-fulfilment.

(11) [Individuality, or personality, according to Vasiṣṭha, does not consist in being anything like a simple, undecomposable, spiritual entity, called soul in the West and *cit* by Rāmānuja in India. It consists, on the other hand, in being a *manas*, a mind, which means a peculiar mode of the Ultimate Reality determined by a peculiar movement, tendency, desire, or will to imagine. The form is in perpetual change, as Bergson also thinks, for it is determined by ever changing activity. Activity and personality are identical for Vasiṣṭha. They are two names for the same tendency. Vasiṣṭha will agree with James on his idea of our personality being an ever flowing stream of thought, and with Bergson that it is in perpetual flux. What modern physicists think of the atom in relation to the ether, Vasiṣṭha thinks of the mind with regard to the Absolute Reality, which he for want of a better expression calls Consciousness.] The idea presented quite recently by some

physicists was so clear in his mind that he calls the mind a *cid-aṇu*, a Consciousness-atom. As an atom now is considered to be nothing apart from motion or force, so mind is nothing, according to Vasiṣṭha, apart from the tendency to conspire in a peculiar way. An electron, many of which compose an atom, now is considered to be a "knot", a "twist", a "nucleus of intrinsic strain", a "whirl", a "vortex-ring", a "centre of force", a "stress of energy" a "special mode or form of motion" in and of the substance of the physical ether. Exactly the same is the conception of mind according to Vasiṣṭha, if instead of physical ether we substitute the term Spiritual ether (*Cid-ākāśa*), a term copiously used by Vasiṣṭha. Schiller also conceives an atom in a more or less similar manner: "An atom may be defined as a constant manifestation of Divine Force or Will exercised at a definite point." (*Riddle of the Sphinx*, p. 272.) Another very important conception of modern physics that is helpful in understanding Vasiṣṭha's view of the mind, is its conception of an atom as a "miniature solar system". (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 113.) According to Vasiṣṭha even Brahmā, the Cosmic Mind with the entire Cosmos within Him, is a *Cid-aṇu* (atom of Consciousness). There seems nothing absurd in this conception when we remember that all size is relative. Every atom, however minute, is a cosmos, and every cosmos, however big, is an atom of the Infinite Consciousness, "the continuous, homogeneous Substance", not only filling all space, but having all spaces within it. Whatever we objectively see as a *thing*, is a form of this Consciousness assumed by a peculiar stress, tendency to conspire, movement of imagination, issuing as a sub-branch, as an offshoot, as a spark thrown away, from a more primary



movement-form, and in its own turn becoming primary to give rise to other movements more secondary in the same way as it originated itself. It is the movement of the mind that constitutes its form in the same way as now it is admitted that it is motion that gives a thing its mass, extension and even qualities. Vasiṣṭha in this way thinks like Leibnitz, that there is no end to the number of mind-atoms or monads in the world. Every point of space is populated by monads and filled with their worlds which interpenetrate one another. As thoughts, which are forms of mind-movements originate every moment, so new monads are coming into existence. Many previously originated ones are also being effaced out of existence when the momentum of their will to continue is coming to an end through the opposite willing generated out of distaste for being limited in finite forms. As waves continue to be such so long as the motions that form them continue, so also does an individuality continue as long as there is a will to be individual.

(12) Thought is the most potent force in the world. Every one becomes what he constantly thinks of becoming or imagines to be, in proportion to his faith. We are at this moment the result of our previous thought and shall be changed in accordance with our thought, as Buddha also taught. Our world, our environment, our bodies, our powers and capacities change in accordance with our thinking. All our limitations are the limitations of our thought. All sufferings and miseries are consequent upon our perverse thinking, and can be cured by right thinking. There is no other agency except our own thinking that determines our destiny here and hereafter. Vasiṣṭha has long ago taught what the New Thought movement is discovering today.



(13) The term mind is not to be understood in the sense of any one of its many functions exclusively, as has been done by the voluntaristic or intellectualistic metaphysicians of the West, nor should we think that will, intellect or emotion are different faculties of mind, which can be exercised apart from each other. Vasiṣṭha believes in the unity of mind, and holds that it is the same mind which is called by the different names of intellect, will, imagination, emotion, ego, desire, memory, attention, sensation, etc., all of which are equally primary functions of the mind, and are equally present in every moment of its existence. He very often uses these terms synonymously, and the reader is very often at a loss to understand him.

(14) Through the process of the constant denial of the actual limitations and thoughtful auto-suggestion and affirmation of the ideal perfection very extraordinary capacities are evolved in us, for we are, as Trine also holds in his *In Tune with the Infinite*, ever living in the Infinite Ocean of Wisdom, Power and Perfection, but realize them only in proportion to our Thought. The secret of all power consists in the denial of all apparent weakness and affirmation of our being unlimited and infinite, which we in reality are, but the thick wall of the thought of limitation in us obstructs the vision and therefore the exercise of our real power. In the light of the statements made by modern physicists it is not difficult to understand this idea of Vasiṣṭha. Immeasurable energy is said to be potential even in an atom. Sir Oliver Lodge thinks that the amount of energy in every cubic millimetre of space is "expressible as equal to that of a million horse-power station working continuously for forty million years." (*The Ether of Space*, p. 95.) If that is the estimate of physical

energy potential at every point of space, what shall we think of the power present behind every atom of Consciousness? Modern study of Hypnotism has revealed wonderful powers of thought, and many wonderful possibilities in life. Evidences collected by the Psychical Research Society led Myers to think: "The 'Conscious self' of each of us . . . does not comprise the whole of the consciousness or of the faculty within us. There exists a more comprehensive consciousness, a profounder faculty, which for the most part remains potential only." (Myres: *Human Personality*, Abridged, p. 13.) Du Prel says in the same way: "Man appears as a being of groundless depth, reaching with its roots into the metaphysical region." (Car Du Prel: *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. I, p. 142.) Kingsland therefore remarks: "The potential or latent powers of man are as infinite as the One Life itself, even as are the latent powers of every atom." (*Rational Mysticism* p. 124.) The key with which we can unlock the doors of this deeper, greater and more powerful side of our life, according to Vasiṣṭha as well as to the "New Thought", is affirmation with full conviction and without any doubt. Compare what James has said: "We need only in cold blood ACT as if the thing in question were real, and keep acting as if it were real, and it will infallibly end by growing into such a connection with our life that it will become real." (James: *Principles of Psychology*. Vol. II, p. 321.)

Transcendental powers can also be realized, as has been the belief of the *Hatha-yogins* of India, through the control of the *Kuṇḍalīnī Sakti* residing in the solar plexus. According to Vasiṣṭha the solar plexus is the physical centre in the body with which the higher aspects of our life are connected. This, and not the



brain, is probably the physical organ through which the higher consciousness and its powers are to manifest. The brain seems to be the organ of that much consciousness as is already evolved in our lives. To realize more of it at the present stage, the Power involved in the solar plexus has to be aroused and directed to the brain. It is really surprising that the study of many supernormal phenomena of consciousness has led Du Prel to a similar view: "As waking consciousness proceeds parallel with the corresponding changes of the senses and brain, so the transcendental psychical functions seem to be parallel with the corresponding changes in the ganglionic system, whose central seat, the solar plexus, was already called by the ancients the brain of the belly." (*Philosophy of Mysticism*. Vol. I, p. 170.) "That the ganglionic system can assume the function of the cerebral system", he further says, "is apparent also in the animal kingdom, as in molluscs, and such insects as have highly developed instincts, but imperfectly developed senses." (*Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 171.)

(15) The concept of the Self is different from that of individuality. The search after the Self in Hindu Philosophy is the search after that within us which never changes in spite of the perpetual change of personality, in spite of the repeated displacement of the threshold of sensibility. It is the search after the essence of the subjective aspect of the universe. The permanent cannot cease to be. The subject cannot be an object at any time. Vasiṣṭha therefore tries to find out what aspect of us endures throughout all the levels of experience, waking, dream, sleep and the "fourth" in which all these are transcended, and what aspects drop away in any one of them. In the same way he tries to find out what aspects of our being



can be made objects of our experience. He also tries to discover the prime mover within us which sets all other aspects of our personality in motion. The prime mover, the subject, and the permanent in us is the Self. It is then quite evident that none of the concepts, body, senses, mind, intellect, ego, individuality, all of which can be transcended in one or the other level of experience, all of which are objects of consciousness, all of which are moved to activity by something else from the deep within, can be the Self, the essence of subjectivity. Moreover, there cannot be a duality between the subject and the object ultimately, otherwise knowledge would not be possible. Therefore, as Green also thinks, in his *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Vasiṣṭha thinks that the Self in the subject should be identical in essence with the ultimate substance of the objects (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 37), the Ultimate Essence of the Universe. The Self, according to him, is the Reality that is at the Root of the Universe, which manifests itself in all things of the world.

It may be noted that the problem of the Self is the main problem of the *Advaita Vedānta* of Śaṅkarācārya and his school, and in no other philosophy probably so much has been thought over the Self as in the *Upaniṣads* and the systems of philosophy based upon them, called the *Vedānta* Philosophy. The doctrine of the Self of Vasiṣṭha is essentially the same as that of the *Advaita Vedānta*, so far as the central idea is concerned. Vidyāraṇya, the author of *Pañca-dasī*, who certainly knew and read the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha*, tries to prove in the first chapter of *Pañca-dasī* the identity and continuity of Consciousness throughout all levels of experience, waking, dream, sleep and *samādhi*, and the discontinuity of other factors of personality on this or

that level. He identifies it with the Brahman, the essence of the Universe on the authority of the Scripture and not on any argument. It is a great credit to Vasiṣṭha that he does not justify any of his views by quoting the Scripture. He is a Philosopher and not a commentator or expounder of the *Upaniṣads*, as unfortunately many of the bright intellects have been in India.

Towards the problem of the Self, it may also be mentioned here, the early Buddhist philosophers had a negative attitude, which is entirely acceptable to Vasiṣṭha. They repudiate the idea of a soul as an individual, simple, undecomposable, spiritual substance behind every living creature, because on analysis they discovered that every thing, and every living creature, is a composite being (*skandha*), like a chariot, and is in perpetual flux like a river. Vasiṣṭha accepts all this and himself denies such a soul or *jīva*, as he calls it, being the Self. But the later Buddhistic thinkers like Asva-ghoṣa, probably because he was originally a Brāhmanical thinker (*Vide Dāsa-gupta: A History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 138), introduced the *Upaniṣadic* idea of a Universal Essence of things, "*Bhūta-tathatā*", behind every being with which every one is identical in essence. This idea is very much similar to Vasiṣṭha's idea of the Self, which is a beautiful synthesis of the soul and the non-soul theories.

(16) The individuality, however changing and impermanent it may be, is not dissolved with the decay of the physical body and its total dissolution by death. The body is only an external manifestation of the inner will to be, which, with countless desires and hopes, persists to continue as an individual mind, and will, as a consequence of the unfulfilled desires, surely experience



another body and another world. What the loss of the physical body does is only that it shuts the individual from the experience of this world which is relative to these senses. It would be wrong to believe that the individual is totally extinguished or effaced out of all worlds. Death, according to Vasiṣṭha, only brings about a change in the kind of the objective world of the individual. It shuts from us the world with which we are no longer *en rapport*. It is not the passage of the soul or the individual to a distant place along the *Deva-yāna* or *Pitr-yāna* of the *Upaniṣads* and *Saṃkara*, but an experience, after a temporary insensibility consequent upon the shock of losing the vision of this body and this world, of a new objective world *in this very place*, if this expression can at all be used rightly and seriously in this connection. This new experience is, of course, not accidentally determined. It is what "the dead one" morally deserved though coloured by and imagined in accordance with his beliefs. If desire for the objects of this world (in which we are now living) remained potential in the individual, which usually is the case, when his body was dissolved here, then surely after some time this world will again be experienced by him. For the chain that binds us to experience any thing or any world is desire. Probably, nay, surely, death itself is a consequence of the working of this law. This conception of Vasiṣṭha is quite in accord with the most up-to-date views formed on the problem in the light of the facts discovered by the Psychical Research Society and in conformity with reason and modern science. "Pontifically—if opponents like to call it so—I assert emphatically", writes Sir Oliver Lodge in a recent book of his, "that there is evidence for Survival, and that some of the



evidence is thoroughly good." (*Making of Man*, p. 35.) He also writes: "There is no 'next' world save subjectively. . . . What we call the 'next world' is co-existent and simultaneous with this." (*Ibid.*, p. 33.) Death is, really speaking, a change in the "threshold of sensibility" according to some of the modern thinkers and to Vasiṣṭha also.

(17) Most of us, probably all individuals within a world-system, receive the world idea, or find it represented in us, of course in accordance with our worth and in a way peculiar to ourselves, but do not create in the real sense of the word. Most of the minds are reproductive rather than creative actually, although potentially all are capable of the highest creative act. But there is a mind which *really* creates ideas in his imagination, which for us are the things of the external world like mountains, rivers, oceans, etc., which are represented as facts and things generally unalterable by our thoughts. We may or may not experience them, but they are there, even if all individuals of this world are effaced out of existence, there is a probability of the cosmos being continuously in existence, as long as the Mind which imagined it continues to wish its existence. To account for this, Vasiṣṭha has conceived the idea of a Cosmic Mind or Brahmā. It is Brahmā that really creates this world through his imaginative activity with the freedom and skill of an artist. The Cosmos is an ideal construction in his mind, not represented as in us, but truly and originally created, and created with complete indeterminism. No previously existing plan is to be followed, for there is none in existence or in memory, Brahmā, according to Vasiṣṭha, himself being a fresh whirl formed in the ocean of the Absolute Consciousness. He is quite a new wave of

imaginative activity, of mentation, a spontaneous stress of creative energy sportfully arising in the Ocean of the Reality. He is the Lord of our Cosmos. We, as the world around us, are his thoughts in the literal sense of the term, and live, move and have our being in his mind. The world continues as long as his imagination is at work and will gradually dissolve when he ceases from this play of his imagination and therefore himself too merges back in the ever-existing Reality, for individuality and activity are identical. The *Advaita Vedānta* conception of *Īśvara*, the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhist conception of the *Tathagata-garbha* or of *Ālaya-vijñāna* (if the latter is understood cosmically), the Idea of Hegel, and the Logos of the Theosophists are the concepts that more or less correspond with Vasiṣṭha's idea of *Brahmā*.

(18) *Brahmā* has been considered to be a wave of mentation in the Ocean of Consciousness in the same way as the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhist Philosophers have considered the *Ālaya-vijñāna* to be that in the calm ocean of the *Bhūta-tathatā*. But we all know that the rise of a wave on the surface of calm ocean is due to a great extent to some external influence like wind or the attraction of the sun and the moon. There must, then be sought some cause of the rise of mentation-wave in the ocean of Consciousness or the *Tathatā*. *Aśva-ghoṣa* postulates a wind of ignorance to create disturbance in the calmness of the *Tathatā*. Is this ignorance an external influence or something inherent in very nature of the *Tathatā*?—is not discussed by him or any other *Mahā-yāna* Buddhist. The *Advaita Vedānta* of *Śaṅkara* is also confusing on this point. They generally leave the problem as *anirvacanīya* (undecided or lit. unspeakable) as to whether the ignorance, which brings about the world, a conception borrowed by



them from the Buddhists, is *bhinna* (different) from or *abhinna* (identical) with the Ultimate Reality, which is a characterless and pure Unity for them. The same problem confronted the scientist philosophers of the nineteenth century who believed in *Matter* being evolved into the multiplicity of the world under the influence of Energy, and Haeckel satisfied his keen intellect by a monistic hypothesis constructed under the inspiration of Spinoza that "Matter, or infinitely extended substance, and Spirit (or Energy), . . . are two fundamental attributes or principal properties of the all-embracing divine essence of the world, the universal substance." (Haeckel: *The Riddle of the Universe*, the last para of Chap. I.) The problem is again now confronting the modern physicist with regard to Ether and Electricity, and the tendency of the up-to-date metaphysics of science is towards a concrete monism of Ether with electrical energy inherent in it. But for a more comprehensive philosopher like Vasiṣṭha the concept of ether cannot merely be physical, for there are mental and spiritual aspects of the Universe also which the physical concept alone cannot explain, but Spiritual (*Cid-ākāśa* = the ether of Consciousness). With this difference, his view and the solution of the problem are very much similar to the modern. He is aware of the difficulty in a dualistic metaphysics of the *Tathatā* and *avidyā*-wind, of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, thinking, like Lotze, that relation always presupposed a deeper substantial identity behind the related factors. The cause of disturbance in the calm waters of the Ocean of Reality is not, therefore, according to him, an external or quasi-external wind of ignorance, but an inherent energy, a power of movement, a creative impulse, a will to manifest in finite forms, which is ever present in the Reality either as in actual



operation or in potential rest. This is the concept of *S'akti* inherent in the Absolute *S'iva*. This doctrine is the predominating doctrine of the *Sakta* school of *Vedānta* and of the *Trika* system of Indian Thought now generally known as the Kashmir *Saivism*.

(19) What can we say of the Absolute and Ultimate Reality, which is the Substance of all things, the Unity behind the subject and the object of Experience, the essence of all forms, the Ocean in which we all live and move; from which we, down from the *Logos* to the minute vermin, nay, the tiniest electron, originate; in which we are tossed up and down by the force of our own desires; and in which we break as bubbles when the force of the will to be is spent up? Words fail to describe it, for, they are but linguistic symbols for things of the manifested world, and the Reality is much more than its manifested aspects. The categories of our experience are, one and all, incapable to express the Reality which is in and beyond the world-experience. No aspect of the whole can be equated with the whole. All our concepts—matter, mind, subject, object, one, many, self, not-self, being, non-being, etc.,—comprehend one or the other aspect of Reality, but not the Absolute Reality as such. They prove unsatisfactory when applied to the Reality which is inherent in every thing denoted by a concept as well as in its opposite—its other in contradistinction to which it is this thing. All moulds crack under the weight of Reality. All the grooves created by philosophy to fit the Reality in are unsatisfactory, for there always remains much of the Reality that "cannot be fitted into a groove". The Reality, therefore, if to be described at all, should be described in all terms, positive and negative, and not in any one term. Either affirm everything

of it, or deny everything to it, if you have to speak at all. Otherwise, keep silent if you have already arrived intellectually at the synthesis of all affirmation and negation in the silent realization of the Absolute Calm, the Blissful *Nirvāṇa*. This view of the Ultimate Reality is shared with Vasiṣṭha by some of the *Upaniṣads* in many places, by Aśva-ghoṣa in his *Mahāyāna-sraddhotpāda-sāstra*, by Nāgārjuna in his *Madhyamika-kārikas*, by S'amkara, by Kabīra, and by many Western mystics and philosophers like Bradley.

(20) Every form in the world is a manifestation of the Reality, the Absolute Consciousness, through Its own Power to manifest. There is nothing here which is not a mode of the Reality, which in spite of being differentiated in countless forms keeps Its Unity intact, because It in itself is the continuous medium in which all forms, which are such only relatively to one another, persist temporarily. One form may be separate and distinct from another form as such, but can never be separate and distinct from the Reality of which it is a form. An ornament of gold is never separate from gold with which it is ever one. Bubbles, ripples, waves, etc., are never different from water of which they are forms, and abstracted from which they will cease to be anything at all. Everything, in the same way, in this universe, no matter whether it is physical, mental or spiritual; no matter whether it is great or small; no matter whether it persists for a moment or centuries, is *identical* with the Reality, the Whole present behind every one of Its differentiations. Everything in this universe *is* the Brahman. We *are* the Brahman, "Thou *art* That". It is a fact here and now, and the realization of this fact gives us unbounded power and joy. "The knower of the Brahman becomes the



Brahman", one of the *Upaniṣads* rightly declares. This view of Vasiṣṭha is shared by almost all the mystics and occultists of the world. It is the doctrine expressed in the so-called *Mahā-vākyas* of the *Upaniṣads* which all the *Vedantic* thinkers have been trying to explain in their own way. It is a doctrine which Aśva-ghoṣa in his *Sraddhotpāda-sāstra* accepts with a caution that as forms we are different from the *Tathatā*, although in essence we are identical with it, in the same way as waves are related to water in an identical as well as non-identical way. Modern Physics also cannot be against this assertion, for according to it we can say that every physical thing is ether. Kingsland writes like Vasiṣṭha: "We are already one with the Absolute, and our quest is not for something which we do not possess, but simply a self-realization." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 367.)

(21) The test or definition of reality is eternal persistence. All forms persist only temporarily, their essence is the only persisting reality. They, as forms, come into existence and pass out of it. There was a time when they did not exist as such forms, and evidently there will be a time when they as such will not be in existence, whether that time comes after a moment or after æons. How can therefore any form or thing be said to be real in the true sense of the term? But they undoubtedly are also not unreal in the true sense of the term, for they partake of reality, however little it may be, because they persist for some time at least. They may not be absolutely real, but they are not totally unreal at present. A new category is required to comprehend this fact of the forms being not absolutely real nor unreal, but persisting temporarily. Vasiṣṭha calls such things *mithyā* (not true), *avidyā*



(that which *exists* not), *māyā* (that which *is* not) and *bhrama* (delusion). This idea is very much discussed in the *Advaita* school of *Vedānta*. The Absolute Idealists of the West like Bradley and Taylor also use the word *appearance*, as opposed to reality, with regard to the concepts of experience, but their test of Reality is absence of self-contradiction. There is yet another sense in which Vasiṣṭha considers the objective forms not realities but as appearance. As we already know, he is an idealist of a thorough-going type and believes that objects of experience are nothing apart from their appearance in the mind. There is nothing real in the sense of the Realists in any object. Its reality consists in its appearance as an idea in some mind. The existence of every world and every object is only relative to its experiencer. It is naught to another who has not got the same contents in his own experience, like the vision of a ghost, like things in the experience of a hypnotized person who experiences actually anything and everything suggested to him by the hypnotizer in an empty void where others see nothing at all, or see different things. The world and all objects in it are appearances in this sense. There is nothing strange in this conception in the light of modern science which is proving the relativity of the sensible qualities, size, mass, etc., of all objects. They are relative to the observing mind abstracted from which they are only waves and vibrations in the ether of space.

(22) In Itself the Absolute Reality is above all changes, above all distinctions and differentiations, above all relations. All distinctions are within It, yet in itself, as a Whole It is a distinctionless, homogeneous Substance. All the opposites—Self and not-self, subject and object, being and non-being, one and many,

consciousness and unconsciousness, rise and fall of individual and world-processes, etc., negate each other, balance each other, fuse with each other, neutralize each other into a zero, a total blankness in the Ultimate Reality which is the heart of both the opposites, neither of which as such forms the content of this Timeless and Spaceless Reality. The *samsāra*, creation, world, individuals, objects, bondage and freedom, etc., all as such are absent in the Absolute Experience considered in Itself, because their existence as forms is relative to some particular kind of consciousness apart from which they are not anything. They are all like dream-objects which have no existence apart from their being perceived and imagined by some mind. Production or origination of anything is meaningless for the Absolute and from the Absolute point of view, for, in the Absolute everything is ever negated. Acosmism is the Ultimate and the highest truth. Gauḍa-pāda and Śaṅkara both agree with Vasiṣṭha on the view that from the Absolute point of view there is no world, no individual, and no ignorance or bondage. Nāgārjuna begins with a similar statement of acosmism in his *Mādhyamika-kārikās*.

(23) The Absolute and Ultimate Reality is not only the Self or essence of all forms, the Source of all movements, but also the home of Bliss, nay, Bliss Itself, which consciously or unconsciously we are all seeking, but seeking in wrong places. Finite things cannot satisfy us, cannot make us happy, for, the very moment we get the objects of our desire and have a little pleasure, there arises another desire in us for another thing which causes pain as long as it remains unsatisfied. The pain changes into pleasure when the desire is tending towards fulfilment, but the pleasure again changes into pain when another desire arises in



its place and remains unsatisfied. This constant alteration of pleasures and pains is our lot, as long as we continue to indulge in desires for the finite, changing and unreal worldly objects. This perpetual disturbance in our mind obstructs in us the feeling of the real, independent and unconditional happiness, the Bliss that is ever ours, is inherent in the very Self of ours, but to realize which we have to cease from desiring external things on which we falsely hang our happiness, and to know the real Self.

(24) In fact we are ever one with the Infinite and Absolute Reality, yet at the present stage of our evolution we *do not know that*. We are in reality the Infinite, unlimited, and omnipotent, yet we *feel to be finite*, limited and weaklings. Bliss is the very being of us, yet we *desire* this or that object *thinking wrongly* that it will bring happiness home to us. Our abiding and enduring essence in the Self, the Reality behind everything, yet we take it to be the *ego*, the ever changing personality. Everything is within my Self, and my Self is within everything, yet I limit my *interest* to this or that object, *prefer* this to that, *attach* myself to particular things and actions, *possess* something and reject another. No form is real, yet we take everything to be real. All these are so many aspects of our *bondage*, the release from which is called Liberation, which consists in our *conscious realization* of our being identical with the Absolute and freedom from limitations of all kinds. This experience can be realized even while one is living in this body, for we are one with the Absolute *here and now*. The concept of *Nirvāṇa* of the *Maha-yāna* Buddhists, when rightly understood, will be found to be the same, as Suzuki has tried to show in his *Outline of Maha-yāna Buddhism*, according to



whom it is not only a negative idea of the dissolution of individuality in the Absolute *Bhūta-tathata* or *Tathagata-garbha*, but also the positive idea of Bliss and participation in the Absolute. Vasiṣṭha uses, as the author of the *Bhagavad-gītā* has also used, the word *Nirvāṇa* for realization of identity with the Absolute.

(25) How can the bondage be transcended and *Nirvāṇa* realized? As bondage is more or less the same as ignorance, it is due to ignorance of the fact that we are here and now the Absolute, it can only be transcended through *knowledge*, intellectual conviction of our being one with the Absolute, which brings about a thorough change in the outlook on life, and thus diminishes little by little the finitizing tendencies. This knowledge and the consequent realization of *Nirvāṇa* cannot be attained but through one's own effort in rational investigation of truth conducted with the help of the discovery by the thinkers of the past embodied in their philosophical works and in association with the living wise men. Worship and propitiation of any god, thinking that he might confer Liberation or liberating knowledge upon one, in spite of oneself, as a boon of favour, is a wrong idea of the ignorant mind. Every one is his own liberator. God is not to be sought elsewhere but within, where He resides in fullness, and the only worship that is required to please Him is thinking and meditating on His nature. Dedication of all what one does and has to the God within is the worship of a wise man. To realize Liberation one has not to retire from the activities of life, and to actually forsake home and family. It is a folly which is due to wrong suppositions. One has only to philosophize and live his philosophy, for verily we *know* in proportion as we *live* our knowledge.

(26) Knowledge for Vasiṣṭha is not a mere satisfaction of "the natural desire for knowledge as an end in itself." (Kulpe: *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 9), nor is it a means to worldly gain of money, name and honour as it is generally supposed to be in the present time. People who gather knowledge for these purposes are mere buyers and sellers of knowledge, rather than true lovers and lovers of knowledge which only the truly wise men are. We have not only to *know*, but also to *be* and to *feel*, for, all these aspects are at the root one, and so expand *pari pasu*. To truly know the Absolute, we have to expand into the Absolute, partaking ever and ever more of the Joy of the Absolute. How to effect this expansion is therefore no less important a problem of our life than intellectual investigation into the nature of reality, with which modern mind is too much busy. Self-realization, as this expansion has been called, must be a process along two lines which are in fact one and the same, namely, *denial* of the individuality, which is but the same as limitation and imperfection, and *affirmation* of the Self which is perfection and universality. As our individuality does not only consist of *intellect* but also of *emotion* and *activity*, which are identically the same at the root, and the Self not only Absolute Consciousness but also the Absolute Rest and Absolute Bliss, the practice of Self-realization may proceed along three ways, or along any one of them, for they are only the three aspects of the same process, (a) Intellectual conviction of not being an individual but of being the Self; (b) Negation of desire, attachment, likes and dislikes, imagining to gain this or that, possessing this or that, feeling to be an individual, etc., all which are the various aspects



of our emotional nature. Along with this negative process, we require the positive cultivation of equanimity, universal brotherhood, cosmic feeling, and love of the Self verging on ecstasy. And (c) Practising to stop the perpetual activity manifesting itself in the constant rising and setting of the vital breath (*prāṇa*), which is an external symbol of our internally being in perpetual flux, along with lengthening the usually unnoticed moments of rest which arise when one current of the vital breath has set in and the other has not taken its rise. This moment in the breathing activity corresponds to that experience of rest in consciousness, however fugitive it may be, when one idea has ceased to occupy the field of consciousness and another has not yet appeared. This in brief is the practical method of Self-realization, which embodies in itself all the best that was ever discovered in India, the home of *Yoga* and *Yogins*. Buddhist philosophers thought that *Nirvāṇa* was attainable through negation of desires and annihilation of the modes of mind (*Asva-ghoṣa*); Patañjali thought that the transcendental nature of the *Puruṣa* (Self) could be realized in *samādhi* which is effected by the stoppage of the modifications of mind (*citta-vṛtti*) consequent upon the control of breath and contemplation. The *Upaniṣads* taught that the knowledge of the Brahman would make one the Brahman, and Śaṅkara and his followers thought that Self-realization was only a negative process of removing the veil of ignorance cast over the eternally realized fact of Liberation. Vasiṣṭha teaches all these methods, and teaches much more.

(27) Although in reality the Self is ever realized and the individual ever identical with the Absolute, yet from the point of view of the individual, it is a



gradual process which may extend to several lives or to any length of time in accordance with the intensity of the effort of the aspirant. Several stages may be marked on this progressive path of evolution of the individual consciousness into the Absolute. Vasiṣṭha marks them as seven. The first stage is when the individual having come to the consciousness of individual living aspires to transcend it (*Subhecchā*). The second, when he philosophizes over and investigates into the nature of the Self and world (*Vicāraṇā*). The third, when on account of the knowledge of its ultimate unreality revealed by philosophical thinking, the individuality becomes less assertive and less felt (*Tanu-mānasa*). The fourth, when the aspirant begins to feel the being of the Self within him (*Sattvāpatti*). The fifth, when clinging to objects of the world is finally overcome through one's rising above desires (*Asamsakti*). The sixth, when all things are realized to be unreal in the Absolute (*Padarthabhavana*), or when the individual imagines himself to be the Ultimate Reality (*Padārtha-bhavana*). And the seventh, when the mystic experience of being one with the Reality is realized in experience (*Turyā*). This is the last door which opens into the unspeakable *Nirvāṇa*. It may be noticed here that *Jaina* philosophers have also pointed out fourteen stages (*Guṇa-sthānas*) on the path of attaining Omniscience; the *Yogacara* Buddhists have laid down ten stages on the way to becoming a Bodhisattva. The stages pointed out by Vasiṣṭha are peculiarly his own and fit very well in his philosophy.

(28) The life in which a sage experiences the last stage of Self-realization is the last life of individuality, which, from the standpoint of his subjective experience, has already been transcended and negated, but

which objectively still continues as the material effect of his previous willing in the form of this life. This is a shadow in the material world, as it were, of the previous subjective individuality, which is no longer in existence. Thoughts, it seems, we may say, take time to be materialized in the objective world, like the light of distant stars in reaching our eyes. It is possible that a star whose light is reaching us now and so giving us the impression of its present existence, may have been long ago effaced out of existence, if it was distant enough. To us the existence of such a star is a fact, but in the world where the star actually was, it is no longer in existence and no longer perceived. So is also the case with the individuality of a *jīvan-mukta*, a sage who has totally dissolved the individuality and who actually does not feel to be an individual in the world of Spirit and Thought, and who appears to be living, nay, actually lives in the physical world, as an effect, as a passing shadow of the previous individuality. His life is a reality to others, but an appearance in his mind, and unreality for his Self in which he now has his conscious being. This in brief is the idea of *jīvan-mukti*, the Liberation of a man who is yet living, which we can find out in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, if we understand it thoroughly. A detailed account of how such a man conducts his life in the world has been given in its proper place, which we need not repeat here. We may only say that his is the ideal and perfectly happy life on the earth.

(29) Such a man or woman (for we must also remember that for Vasiṣṭha man and woman have equal claims and equal rights in matters of Self-realization and spiritual attainments, without any further distinction of caste or of nationality) is no longer bound by the

universal Law of *Karma* to undergo another birth or experience another objective world as a consequence of his activities performed in this life. He or she is outside the pale of the Law of *Karma*, because only those acts, mental or physical, have to germinate and fructify into future worlds and lives which are done with a *motive*, with a conscious desire to attain or avoid something. But the actions which are performed spontaneously without the least desire or motive or attachment, are above retribution, fructification and bondage.

(30) Such in brief is the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha which was *revealed* to him by Brahmā (the Cosmic Mind), which he realized in his *own experience* to be true, and which he thinks is in perfect accord with *Reason* (*yukti-yukta*) and can be discovered by every one through his own rational investigation (*vicara*). Thus Reason, Intuition and Revelation are not at variance for Vasiṣṭha.



## CHAPTER II

### CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION OF VASIṢṬHA

"A REASONABLE statement, even of a child, should be accepted, while the unreasonable ones are to be discarded like straw, even though they are made by the Creator Himself. A devotee of Reason should value the works even of ordinary persons, provided they advance knowledge and are logical, and should throw away those even of the sages, if they are not such. Such a sentimental person as continues to drink the (filthy) water of a well, simply because it was dug by his dear father, leaving aside the (pure) Ganges water available near at hand, is certainly a slave under others' control." (*Yoga-vasiṣṭha*, II, 18, 2, 3, 4.)<sup>1</sup>

Our study of the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha hitherto has been representative, elucidatory, comparative and sympathetic. Sympathetic, because we think that without intellectual sympathy it is difficult for one to understand what others say and mean. It is by somehow

<sup>1</sup> शुक्तियुक्तमुपादेयं वचनं बालकादपि ।

अन्यतृणमिव त्याज्यमप्युक्तं पद्मजन्मना ॥

अपि पौरुषमादेयं शास्त्रं चेशुक्तिबोधकम् ।

अन्यस्वार्थमपि त्याज्यं भाव्यं न्याय्यैकसेविना ॥

योऽस्मात्तातस्य कूपोऽयमिति कौपं (?) पिबत्यपः ।

त्यक्त्वा गाङ्गं पुरःस्थं तं को न शास्त्यतिरागिणम् ॥

putting ourselves in tune with a philosopher's mind and being in harmony with his thoughts that we really understand him. And to understand thoroughly, to enter deep into the spirit of a philosophy, and to put himself in that very standpoint from which the thinker has looked upon the universe, should be, we think, the first duty of a philosophical critic, if he is honest and is not actuated by extra-philosophical motives. Sympathy, however, is not endorsement and acceptance.

Every philosophical system, we think, is a hypothesis that claims to be a theory of life and the universe as a whole. It has to be tested before it can be accepted or rejected. The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha should be no exception. Vasiṣṭha himself has said: "A reasonable statement, even of a child, should be accepted, while the unreasonable ones are to be discarded like straw, even though they are made by the creator himself." (II, 18, 3.)

What then is the test of the validity or invalidity of a philosophical system? What Svāmī Rāma Tīrtha has said very rightly about religion, we think, is equally true of philosophy: "Accept not a religion because it is the oldest; its being the oldest is no proof of its being the true one. Sometimes the oldest houses ought to be pulled down and the oldest clothes must be changed. . . . Accept not a religion because it is the latest. The latest things are not always the best, not having stood the test of time. . . . Accept not a religion on the ground of its being believed in by a vast majority of mankind, because the vast majority of mankind believes practically in the religion of Satan, in the religion of ignorance. There was a time when the vast majority of mankind believed in slavery, but that could be no proof of slavery being a proper institution. Believe not in a religion on the ground of its being



believed in by the chosen few. Sometimes the small minority that accepts a religion is in darkness, misled. Accept not a religion because it comes from a great ascetic, from a man who has renounced everything; because we see that there are many ascetics, men who have renounced everything, yet they know nothing, they are veritable fanatics. Accept not a religion because it comes from princes or kings; kings are often enough spiritually poor. Accept not a religion because it comes from a person whose character was the highest; oftentimes people of the grandest character have failed in expounding the truth. . . . Believe not in a religion because it comes from very famous men. Sir Isaac Newton is a very famous man, and yet his emissary theory of light is wrong. Accept a thing and believe in a religion *on its own merits*. Examine it yourself. Sift it." (*Heart of Rāma*, p. 27 ff.) We may add to the above list of extra-philosophical grounds for acceptance of a philosophy or religion another very dangerous and precarious ground, namely, Scriptures or Revelation. Even a great genius like Śaṅkara fell a prey to believing that the testimony of the Scriptures was unquestionable, even seeing that there are many absurdities in the Scriptures along with flashes of very deep truths, which he himself found hard to reconcile. No statement of any scripture, we think, should be accepted as true if it is *irrational* and not in conformity with *facts* of actual or possible experience. Moreover, there are countless books which are considered as Scriptures by different people, and they contain views conflicting with those of others, very often self-conflicting views within themselves. Every man, again, interprets the testimony of the scriptures in the light of his own experience and conviction, so that it is more true to say that we put philosophy



already constructed on extra-scriptural evidence into a scripture rather than we discover or learn it from the scripture, as has always been the case with religious views of the world which evolve in accordance with the growth of scientific or philosophical knowledge, and cause people to re-interpret their scriptures. The doctrines of the Bible are not considered to be the same in the twentieth century as they were in the mediæval times. What the Upaniṣads mean for a man well-read in up-to-date philosophy do not mean for an ordinary paṇḍit who knows probably the text better than the former. The test of the truth of a philosophical system, therefore, can in no case be its agreement with the testimony of any scripture, be it the *Vedas*, the Bible or the Qoran. It is a very correct saying that even a devil can quote scriptures in his favour. It is a fact that we have a philosophy, before we find it in any scripture. How nice it would have been if instead of wasting their energy in interpreting the apparently meaningless and absurd statements of the scriptures, the great commentators of the world had learnt the truth at the feet of Nature and Life! That day was epoch-making indeed when Bacon asked his fellow men to go to Nature rather than to the Bible to learn Truth. The world is much wiser today for that change of vision from the scriptures to Reality itself, from which the authors of the scriptures themselves learnt their truths first hand, which will ever remain unintelligible to us so long as we do not have the same direct vision of them. Even the truest revelations remain meaningless until they are realized in experience, until they are observed by us to be facts in reality, taking the word observation in the widest possible sense. There is much truth in Empiricism, if it is rightly and widely

understood. Vasiṣṭha is a radical empiricist, when he holds that we cannot know anything at all until it has come in our *anubhava* (experience) and has become *pratyakṣa* (directly revealed). We are quite in agreement with him with the little remark that, although direct experience gives us the greatest possible certainty of a thing, yet man is not totally incapable of knowing things which are not yet within his direct experience; we mean the experience above the threshold of consciousness. The entire unknown portion of Reality is represented in man in that wonderful faculty which we call Reason, which supplements the little knowledge we have acquired through observation. We agree with the Rationalists, like Leibnitz, Spinoza, Hegel and Bradley that what rationally is possible and necessary must be actually existing in the Universe. Why? Probably because Reason is the Law of Reality, the form in which every portion of Reality is cast, in the same way as our objective world is cast in the forms of time and space and the categories pointed out by Kant. It seems Vasiṣṭha does not disagree with us in so far as he thinks that every doctrine must be rational, otherwise it is not acceptable, and so far as he recommends rational thinking (*vicāra*) and philosophizing to evoke higher experience. He is against, and rightly so, the lower type of rationalism of Inferential logic, which urges to think of the unknown in terms of the known, and to believe to have discovered a *new* truth when in fact we have committed the fallacy of *petitio principii*. On the acceptance of pure empiricism and the denial of rationalism, no philosophizing would at all be possible. Science and knowledge would be identical. And if science would refuse to go deeper in the realm of spirit mysticism would replace it. A higher synthesis of empiricism



and rationalism is, therefore, rightly suggested by the study of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. We are finite individuals within the Infinite Self. Our present experience is relative to the finitude and so gives only a partial truth, or rather, a relative one, but Reason is the higher sense through which we vaguely but really perceive the form of the Self, but not the content, which will be known only when the mystic experience has dawned, a want of the recognition of which is very much felt in the writings of Western Absolute Idealists, who generally look upon the Absolute from the point of view of the world, and not as It is in Itself.

Philosophy is thus neither an empirical science which in no case can and should go beyond the given in experience, the observed, the directly known, nor mysticism in which there remains no problem of knowing anything. Yet the doctrines of a true philosophical system should not contradict facts of actual or possible experience so far as their formal aspects are concerned. An ideal philosophy should not be upset by any fact of the universe. Every fact of the world, every aspect of life, every content of experience, should at once fit in the moulds of the true philosophy without breaking them. Its doctrines should not be upset by any new discovery of facts in nature or intuitions within. On the other hand, the doctrines of a true philosophy should rather be more and more justified and verified as scientific, occult, or mystic knowledge advances further and further. This has actually been the case with quite a number of the doctrines of Indian and Western philosophers, which the exact scientific knowledge is endorsing. An ideal philosophical hypothesis must admit the claims of all demands of our life, intellectual, emotional and active. It must take note of all types



of experience, waking, dream, sleep and those moments of conscious forgetfulness which we experience when we are merged in the contemplation of the beautiful, the true and the good; no less than these, of the mystic experience which has always been reported by some throughout the history of the world. It must be a grand synthesis of all the positive doctrines of all the philosophers of the world, of all religions, of all discoveries of science; for, we must remember that all the great thinkers, whether in science, religion or philosophy, have taken note of some such aspects of the reality as cannot be denied to belong to it, and so should not be denied a place in the ideal philosophy, no matter if they are transcended and transmuted in the Reality as a whole. Philosophy, thus according to us, is the most comprehensive scheme of concepts prepared under the guidance of Reason, in which all contents of the actual and possible experience must fit; in which all concepts of science, religion and other philosophical systems must be offered a rightful place. If any philosophical hypothesis comes out successful in this test, that we shall accept as a valid theory of life and universe. We appreciate a philosophical system more or less in proportion to its being more or less capable of this definition and of this test. How far the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha is worthy of being accepted as a theory of the Universe, we have in an indirect way shown throughout our treatment of it. Here we shall briefly, without examining the details of the philosophy which space does not permit, say a few things on this point more explicitly. We shall take here into consideration a few problems of philosophy that have come into prominence in the East or the West, and will try to determine how far the concepts or views of Vasiṣṭha

on them offer any satisfactory solution of them, or how far they synthesize the views of other prominent thinkers of India or of Europe. In discharging this duty, which we owe to the reader, we shall be as brief as possible, and will not aim at an exhaustive elaboration of our views, as the present chapter is not meant to be a treatise on our own philosophy.

### 1. *One or Many?*

One of the most important problems that a speculative philosopher has to tackle with is whether reality is ultimately one or many. In the history of philosophy there have been philosophers, like the Eleatics and some *Advaita Vedāntists*, who have been so much fascinated by the concept of "one without a second" that they have declared that the vision of many, of the plurality and multiplicity of the world, which we experience, is totally illusory. There have been others, like the *Naiyāyikas*, *Vaiśeṣikas*, *Jainas*, *Sāṃkhyas*, and the Neo-Realists, who have stuck so much to the idea of "many" ultimate realities that according to them to call the world a universe is to beg the question, for it is, according to them, a "multiverse" rather than a universe. Thinkers of the former group believe that the vision of plurality is only in the intellect and not in reality, and those of the other group think that the idea of unity is imposed by the mind upon the reality which is many, and so it is merely conceptual and not real. Both the schools forget that the mind is also a fact to be taken into consideration, and that it cannot be abstracted from the entire experience which is to be explained.

In actual experience, however, we nowhere find a plurality without unity, and a unity without plurality, seek it either in the world of external things or of



internal thoughts we may. Everything material or mental is *many* from one aspect, from one point of view, from one consideration; and is *one* from another aspect, from another point of view, and from another consideration. The world as a whole is as much a universe as a multiverse from different points of view. Sticking to one conception is only a partial view of reality, and so, a philosophical prejudice, as *Jaina* Logic rightly suggests. Unfortunately *Jaina* metaphysicians themselves have disregarded the sane advice of their logic of *Nayas*, in so far as they are thoroughgoing pluralists. Neither the pluralist nor the singularist can give a satisfactory explanation of the facts of the universe. It is impossible to form a consistent theory of the world, if everything is supposed to be self-existent and eternally independent of another, which is a necessary corollary of pluralism. Each unit, in that case would exist only for itself, and would be incapable of entering into relation with another, as Lotze suggests. Unity, uniformity, interaction, knowledge, ethical impulse, sympathy, love, etc., all then will remain unexplained. A connected and unified experience, which is a fact within and without, requires, as Green rightly points out, a unifying principle; we shall say, a real *oneness* at the root. Plurality, on the other hand, is also a *fact*, which is not rightly interpreted by those who are thoroughgoing singularists. A simple and abstract unity, which instead of absorbing plurality within it repels it, cannot be a sound postulate of philosophy. Plurality is a fact to be comprehended and understood and not to be rejected as an *inexplicable* illusion or delusion of the mind and the senses. For, even being this, it is also a fact to be understood and explained. There are other philosophers, like Lotze and Rāmānuja, who try to reconcile



the concept of unity with plurality by assuming the existence of independent and real individuals as well as that of an all-embracing ultimate substance. The problem is to a certain extent solved, but it is solved only apparently. What is meant by a real plurality? We nowhere, either in the objective or in the subjective world, find anything identically the same persisting for more than a moment, as the Buddhist philosopher rightly points out. By the reality of plurality is it, then, meant that the many, which are the facts of our experience, are real as they are in this moment of their existence? For, it is evident that they are not the same in the next, as Bergson also thinks. But the search for the ultimate reality is not the search for that which endures for a moment only. It is for that which is ever present as the foundation of the universe. In what form, then, are the reals of pluralism, or even of those who believe in plurality-in-unity real? If they are real in the form in which they are in the present moment, philosophy has no work before it and it must be bid good-bye for ever, for then sense-perception or intuition alone will suffice for knowledge. If, on the other hand, they are real in the forms in which they eternally persist—either as atoms which by their combination in peculiar manner which keeps changing, constitute the momentary object, or as soul-reals persisting unchanged throughout the changes of the ever changing empirical personality—there will arise other difficulties which Sāṃkara has pointed out in his commentary on the *Tarkapāda*. The doctrine of atoms being an ultimate plurality of undecomposable substances has been well-nigh exploded by present-day Science. "Physical Science in order to explain the phenomena of matter and force, or matter and motion, has now been

compelled to fall back upon the old philosophical concept of a single Unitary Root Substance or Principle. The 'solid, massy, hard, impenetrable particles so hard as never to wear or break to pieces' have had their day, and have been found wanting." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 89.) The genius of William James has given a final blow to the soul theory. [The philosophical doctrine that is more true to the facts of mental life than the soul-theory, is probably that "The soul is a plurality of psychical experiences comprehended into the unity of consciousness in a manner not further definable." (Paulsen: *Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 129.)]

The view, therefore, that can be more satisfactory on the problem of one and many than that of Lotze or Rāmānuja, and which may synthesize all the conflicting views on the problem, would perhaps be that there is a Unitary Substance at the heart of the Universe, which is manifesting Itself in the individuals and things that change perpetually. The Substance is an unchanging Unity, a Unity far deeper than the relative unities of the things of experience. Brahman is the name given by Vasiṣṭha and by the much earlier sages of the *Upaniṣads* to this One Being at the heart of the world of change, the *jagat*. The universe is many when we look at it from the point of view of the changing, ever-changing, forms, which endure only for a moment; it is One when we look at it from the point of view of the enduring and ever-remaining-the-same Substance. The many are only the forms or modes of the One apart from which they are nothing. Kingsland rightly says, and Vasiṣṭha fully agrees with what he says, that "There is no such thing as an individual thing, a 'thing in itself' apart from the Unity of the whole. It only becomes a *thing* when certain specific modes of



its action are recognized under the limitations of time and space to the exclusion of others". (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 117.) Vasiṣṭha goes even further, and we agree with him, and holds that the Reality in Itself is beyond the categories of one and many, for both concepts are relative and within the whole.

## 2. *Spirit or Matter?*<sup>1</sup>

What is the qualitative character of the Ultimate Reality? This is another very important problem of philosophy on which much has been thought. Materialism, Spiritualism, Dualism of matter and spirit, and a Monism in which matter and spirit are somehow unified may be given as general names to most of the answers that have been suggested from time to time. The concepts of matter and spirit are so different in different schools that it requires a large space to specify them exhaustively. We shall here restrict ourselves to a general view and will not go into details.

The objective world is the first thing that usually attracts our attention when we begin to think of reality, although it cannot be denied, as Descartes pointed out, that the thinker is presupposed in all thinking. There is an inherent demand in man to know the whole reality, but at the same time man is impatient to realize that demand, and this impatience leads him to interpret the whole in terms of the part that is revealed to him in the objective world. This impatience is, again, responsible for the many pitfalls of philosophers. The search for reality in the external world in which the inner aspects of the universe are concealed from our vision, and the neglect of the claim of the inner aspect or the reality which is revealed only within us, tend to

<sup>1</sup>For a thoroughgoing Criticism of Materialism see our article: "A Critique of Materialism as an Ontological System" in the *Katyāṇa-kalpa-taru*—God Number, Gorakhpur.



make a man a materialist, whom we may in the most general way define as one who accounts for all the facts of the world in terms of those aspects, attributes or characters of the reality which are objectively revealed, or in terms of some concepts that are constructed to comprehend the objective world; and who believes that in the reality as such there is no other aspect, and if there appears to be any that is only phenomenal. Extension, mass, inertness, movement, only the "primary qualities", some of the "secondary qualities", or even all the secondary qualities have at one time or other been the attributes of matter which has stood for the entire reality.

The spiritualists in the same way have tried to explain all the facts of the universe in terms of the concepts formed by observing the other, perhaps the bigger part of the reality at which we can have a peep only through the window of our mind, and have attributed to the reality as a whole, at one time or other, the mental concepts, namely, thought, will, idea, imagination, consciousness, unconsciousness, desire, happiness, love, etc. They have either described the characteristics of the objective world in terms of mental concepts or have called them mere phenomenal appearances.

The dualists, on the other hand, are those philosophers, who, having realized the difficulties of explaining one kind of facts in terms of the other, have kept themselves within the sphere of both, and have denied themselves the pleasure of having found out a unitary view of the universe which is the inherent demand of Reason, but which we at every step wrongly think to have realized.

Quite different from these are those thinkers who are alive to the difficulty of explaining the one kind of

facts in terms of the other and yet do not want to curb the demand of Reason. They are those monists who think that Reality is one but it cannot be characterized in itself by either the attributes of mind or of matter, of subject or of objects.

The chief representatives of materialism have been Hobbes, John Toland, La Mettrie, Holbach, and Moleschott in the West and Cārvāka and Bṛhaspati in India. Spiritualism has been represented by Leibnitz, Berkeley, Fechner, Schopenhauer, etc., in the West and by the Buddhistic idealists and to a great extent by Vasiṣṭha in India. Dualism was preached by Anaxagoras and Descartes in the West and by the atheistic *Saṃkhya* thinkers in India. The former distinguish between mind and matter, whereas the latter between subject and object, the object including within it much that is meant by mind in the West. The monism that does not equate a part with the whole and admits both the subject and object, mind and matter to be equally phenomenal in the world, is represented in the West by Schelling, and in the East by the theistic *Saṃkhya* of the *Mahā-bhārata*, *Advaita Vedānta* and Vasiṣṭha. According to Vasiṣṭha, the Absolute is beyond subject and object, beyond self and not-self, beyond the living and the non-living, although it cannot be denied that Vasiṣṭha is a spiritualist in opposition to a materialist, so far as he explains and describes every material or objective thing in mental or spiritual terms.

Here we do not mean to give a thorough criticism of any of these doctrines, yet we shall point out the main reason on which we reject or accept any one of them. In the objective world we are face to face not with all aspects of reality, but with only a few of them, probably, very few in comparison to what are concealed



from our view. The latter aspects are revealed only when we look within, and there is no reason or proof by which we can deny that those aspects are present within material or objective bodies also. To deny them there positively and to think that the reality in the objective world is no more than what is revealed to us by our senses, is nothing but materialistic dogmatism. It is a charge of which all sorts of materialism will stand accused. Further, the evolution or manifestation of life from the non-living, of the mind from that in which it was not already involved, and the rise of the spiritual world out of the non-spiritual matter, if the latter is taken to be the ultimate reality, is nothing short of absurdity. [Kingsland is right when he says: "Life and Consciousness are unique, with no possible explanation in that which is already postulated to be dead." ✓ (*Rational Mysticism*, p. 109.)] Although Berkeley's epistemological argument does not fully refute materialism, yet it is perfectly certain that the entire external world can be fully presented as mere ideas of the mind in a dream or hypnotic state. This gives us some assurance to the effect that mental categories may suffice to explain the entire experience, which the material or objective ones do not. But we do not think that so far as the world of our waking experience is concerned, we can call it merely a system of ideas of *our* mind; for the main reason that all the objects do not stand related to *me* in the same way as my psychical ideas over which I have got quite a different kind of control than what I have over the things of the world. There are other obvious differences between a psychical idea and an objective thing, so far as any individual is concerned. The only correct possibility that the phenomena of dream and hypnotism show is that ultimately



there may be a Spirit, a Cosmic mind, which imagines the entire world in the same way as an artist, by his constructive imagination, produces a work of art. It is probably a more correct view about the Reality as a whole than that the blind and inert or moving matter evolves the world of mind. Vasiṣṭha's hypothesis, of course from a partial point of view of reality, is the former as against the latter; and, we think, is sounder than materialism. Vasiṣṭha, however, thinks, and rightly, that the entire reality is not to be measured in terms of the mind. Matter may be reduced to the thoughts or ideas of a higher mind, but certainly there are experiences deeper than the mind, unthinkable in terms of mind, to which the term mind or any of its categories will not apply,—experiences in which the distinction of subject and object is transcended, so that they cannot be rightly called either subjective or objective, mind or matter. Philosophy cannot neglect to take notice of such experiences, and if it does so, its view of reality will be a partial view. A likeness of such experiences can be had in deep sleep, which is neither a subjective nor an objective experience, but of some other kind from which both emerge. This experience is characterized by vagueness, but a similar experience in which subject and object both are absent, yet the experience is clear, can be had in a *samādhi*-state. The Ultimate reality cannot be denied to possess this character as well. A view in which all the aspects of reality can be reconciled will be something like that of Vasiṣṭha, according to whom the ultimate Reality, or Reality as a Whole, is Self-Conscious Experience (using the terms in a higher sense than the ordinary) above the level of subjectivity or objectivity, but within which differentiations of subject and object, of mind and matter, of

living and non-living, etc., arise in relation to each other, as 'only partial views of the whole. None of these concepts express the character of the whole. This is the view of Vasiṣṭha, if we rightly understand him; this is also to a great extent the view of the Western Absolutists like Bradley. We fully agree with it so far as it goes.

### 3. *Realism or Idealism?*

It cannot be definitely said how old the doctrine that things are ideas is in Indian Philosophy, for, as early as the first century A.D., if not much earlier, in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka* and *Aitareya Upaniṣads*, we find Aśva-ghoṣa holding in his *Mahā-yāna-sraddhotpāda-sāstra* that the world-objects are the product of mentation, the activity of the mind. In the West this kind of idealism was brought into prominence by Berkeley in the beginning of the 17th century (A.D.), when he published his famous work, *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*. Since then it has become a lively controversy in the West whether the things of which I am aware exist apart from their being known or perceived. For Berkeley the *esse* of things is their *percipi*. Every object of experience, everything that we can know, is according to him an *idea*, a content of consciousness. It is however very surprising and very often absurd-looking to the man in the street as well as to a man highly interested in the affairs of the world, no less than to a philosopher who does not correctly understand Berkeley. But those who have cared to hear an idealist and to realize difficulties in their own belief, have admitted that the reasoning of an idealist is "irrefragable" (Huxley).

Let us see how a realist believes, and point out some difficulties in his belief. An ordinary man, who



has not yet questioned his views, believes that knowledge consists in becoming aware of things as possessed of those attributes and qualities which the object possesses in spite of any one not perceiving it. The object is considered to be an original thing and our knowledge of it, the idea of the object, is regarded as a copy of it. The correctness of knowledge is determined by the correctness in copying the original—the real object. (*Tadvati tat-prakārako yatharthānubhavaḥ.*) Objects are coloured, though no one may perceive them. So are they smooth or rough, sweet or bitter, big or small, hot or cold, etc. The world is full of those aspects of things which are revealed as ideas in our mind when we perceive or think of them.

Locke, for the first time in Western philosophy, pointed out, against the above view, that some of the qualities we attribute to things are actually due to the perceiving mind, apart from which they cannot be said to belong to things in themselves. Such are colour, sound, taste, smell, heat, cold, etc. Modern science has come to the view that in Nature as such, *i.e.*, apart from the mind, there are only waves (of ether or electricity) of different intensity and measure. They are translated by our mind through the agency of the senses, into various different qualities. Heat, light and sound are in nature destitute of the mind, nothing but physical waves or vibrations. The differences of colours, it has been definitely determined by science, are in their objective nature only differences in rapidity of vibration and the length of the waves of ether. It has also been demonstrated that even the size, mass, inertia, etc., of things, which were considered to be the properties of things in themselves, are in nature nothing more than electric charges translated by the mind into



mass, inertia, size, etc., and are thus not in nature but in the mind. (*Vide* Thompson: *Electricity and Matter*, and Jones: *The Electrical Nature of Matter and Radioactivity*.) Einstein has further demonstrated that they are not only such, but are also relative to the observer and his situation, and change in accordance with the changes in the latter. All these considerations go to strengthen the view of Berkeley, as Sir James Jeans points out in his famous work, *The Mysterious Universe*, that what the realist calls things are ideas in the mind, apart from which they are *not any-thing*. Berkeley's main argument to refute the external existence of everything including even matter or motion, is epistemological one. He argues that all that is known to us, no matter whether it is the "primary" or the "secondary" qualities of things, whether matter or motion, is known as ideas of our mind, and that it is absurd to affirm the existence of anything which is not known. He, therefore, thinks that the being of a thing is its being known.

The idealism of Berkeley, however, is not that kind of idealism which man at his heart really hankers after to gain a creative superiority over his environment. His epistemological argument leaves us where we were. Really speaking, the difference between things and thoughts has not been obliterated by Berkeley, so far as he has not convinced us that we have got the same kind of mastery over or creative freedom in "the ideas", which the realist calls the things. The distinction between things and thoughts must continue, and it is of no *value* to *man* to determine whether Berkeley or the realist is correct so far as merely the epistemological analysis goes. From the pragmatic point of view, it is immaterial whether my knowledge reveals to me things

or ideas, so long as they are two synonymous terms with identical denotation. The demands of intellect, we must remember, are not the only demands to be fulfilled. Desire for power and freedom is perhaps more keen in us than the desire to satisfy intellectual curiosity. The idealism of Berkeley, and of many other idealists of the West, leaves us unsatisfied, for the ideas of the external world are forced upon us by his supposed God. We are constrained to experience them whether we will or not. We cannot change them even if we like and will to do so. It gives us no satisfaction to believe that the world is an idea or a system of ideas, so long as we are not related to it in the same way as we are related to those aspects of experience which are really our ideas (in the psychical sense). The freedom that the individual craves for has been given by Berkeley to his God. But what does it matter to me if God is free to create the ideas which are things for me? If his freedom is my bondage, if his creative happiness is my misery, I, as a sensible creature, would not be satisfied with such a God. This dissatisfaction asserted itself in Hegel, Fichte and Schopenhauer, who all dispensed with the transcendental God of Berkeley whose ideas are imposed upon the individual spirits as things of the world. The creative activity, the manifesting impulse, or the desire to objectify was placed by Fichte in Conscience (moral Ego) in which he found the innermost essence of the individual to consist, by Hegel in Reason which he thought to be operative equally in the individual as well as the objective world, and by Schopenhauer in "the Will to be" which he thought is the innermost essence of the Cosmic nature as well as the individual. In the *Upaniṣads* we find in addition to all these conceptions, another very significant



concept. The world, it is held, is the manifestation of *Ānanda*, Bliss or Joy, with which the individual is ever one at the centre of his being. All these views are more satisfactory for the intellect, will or emotion than that of Berkeley. But they are not *fully* satisfactory to the individual who is moved to philosophize by his own inner craving to be happy, to be free, and to be perfect in wisdom and power. Firstly, because, there is required a combination of all of these views into one with some supplementation of those aspects of our being which are left out unnoticed. Secondly, because the centre of interest in these philosophical hypotheses is more towards the Cosmic Reality than towards the individual. The Humanists and Pragmatists, like Schiller and James are to a great extent justified in criticizing the various types of the Absolutistic Metaphysics, which, they point out, sacrifice the claims of the individual, the freedom of the individual, the happiness of the individual at the altar of the Absolute. The writings of the Absolute Idealists of the West are certainly such as cannot satisfy the demands of the individual. It appears from them that although there is a desire in us to be free, but that the Absolute, which includes us, is free. We want to be happy, but our philosophy shows that happiness is not our lot, but the Absolute is happy, and we are included in it. So is also the case with our demand for knowledge, virtue, etc. And "Fully to realize the Absolute", says Bradley, "is for the finite beings impossible." (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 195.) This in other words means that our aspirations to be perfect, to be free, and to be happy are only chimerical. How can any one be satisfied with such a philosophy which shows the absurdity of the demands of life themselves?



The idealism of Vasiṣṭha is a much superior kind of idealism. It satisfies intellectual, volitional and emotional demands of the individual. It ensures full freedom to him, not only in the Western narrow sense of the choice out of the given alternatives of action, but of imagining and creating any kind of the objective world for himself. It depends entirely upon the individual, according to Vasiṣṭha, what kind of world he is experiencing or will experience; for, every individual's objective world is his own will, desires, and wishes realized. Every individual can be what he wants to be, without any limitation in the "what". If he wills to be perfect he shall be perfect. If he wills to be happy he shall be happy. If he wills to be omnipotent he shall be so. If he has a keen desire to peep into any mystery, he shall be able to do so. If he wills to continue as a finite being, he will do so. And, if he wants to realize Absoluteness, there is no impediment in his way, only if he wills it strongly enough with all the effort at his command. Every individual, according to Vasiṣṭha's philosophy, may be represented by a seed of the tree of the entire world, in which the Divine Will, the Cosmic Will and the individual will are all present, not in conflict, but as focussed in his own will. My world, according to him, in its fullness is the creation of my will. But in my will are focussed all the Universal, cosmic and individual tendencies, so that there cannot be any discord between the Divine, the Cosmic and the individual wills, because all the three operate in me as my own will. My roots are deep down. I am the Absolute Whole manifesting in a particular centre of interest from which I view the whole. There are other innumerable such centres. It lies in my own choice whether I view and feel the Absolute from a

particular point of view as an individual, or giving up the individual point of view, I view It as It is in Itself.

Vasiṣṭha did not arrive at his idealism through the ordinary epistemological analysis of knowledge. It does not take us beyond the conclusion that all the contents of my knowledge are the contents of knowledge or consciousness, *i.e.*, ideas; and that I cannot affirm the existence of anything outside the sphere of my knowledge. There is nothing *new* in this. It is what an Indian Logician would say a case of *siddha-sādhana*, *i.e.*, proving an already evident thing. Vasiṣṭha realized the truth of his idealism in a higher vision of life, where he could actually see that thoughts are things, that thoughts actually appear as an objective world. He has tried to convince those who are not yet sufficiently advanced to have that higher vision by instances of hypnotic suggestion and dream. For a hypnotized person the thoughts of the operator, whether they are verbally suggested or telepathically aroused, are things. He *actually* lives in a world which is a thought-construction of the operator. (*Vide* the story of Lavaṇa in the *Yoga-vasiṣṭha*.) There is hardly any distinction between the experiences of a waking or dream state and hypnotic trance so long as they endure. The contents of one can be completely and identically represented in others. When we wake up from the dream, when we are dehypnotized, and when one is about to die or dead, the objective world of all the three states, dream, hypnosis and waking, is realized to have been nothing but an ideal construction in the mind, without any distinction of one from the other. This kind of reasoning may not convince one of the world being an ideal construction, but there is hardly any doubt that it shakes one's belief in Realism.



It has been argued by some critics of idealism, that it is quite impossible for an idealist to escape solipsism, because according to the epistemological argument everything within the field of knowledge being an idea of the knowing mind, no individual has any right to say that there exists any other thing or individual in the world than himself and his ideas. The Neo-realists, like Perry and others, have very well argued that the Berkeleyian "ego-centric predicament" cannot but limit us to solipsism. So also, when Vasiṣṭha says that the world is an ideal construction of the mind, it appears inconsistent to hold that there are other minds (individuals) and that there is a Brahman (Cosmic Mind), for all that is revealed to my mind is my idea according to idealism. Solipsism seems to be the inevitable consequence of the idealism. And there have been philosophers in India, the *drṣṭi-srṣṭi-vādins*, who have held solipsism to be the most cogent doctrine. In fact, there cannot be any logical refutation of true solipsism. No person can ever refute solipsism without himself being inconsistent. The entire world, with all its contents, of whatever quality they may be, is a system of ideas of *my* experience. The solipsist is refuted because he is not fully aware of the meaning and implication of the word *my* or *I*, which he uses in a confused manner. Let him search for the real meaning of *my* or *I*, if he wants to realize the truth of Solipsism. In discovering the real *I*, he will find out that the *I* is nothing less than the Absolute Whole looked through the window of a particular point of interest. The *I* is the Absolute Consciousness with the entire world present within it as an idea. The mistake of the ordinary solipsist is that, instead of making a search into the real nature and extent of *I* or Consciousness, he readily accepts it to be



something isolated and closed within the physical body, and from there directs his vision outward to the objective world which includes other physical bodies having an equal claim of independent existence to that of his body. Once we understand the real meaning of the individual as the Absolute manifested in a particular form, of the *I* as the Absolute feeling at one centre of interest, and of *my consciousness* as the Absolute peeping through a particular window, we shall not find it difficult to realize that ordinary solipsism, realism and the Absolute Idealism are all true within the higher kind of Solipsism suggested by Vasiṣṭha. To understand it, let us imagine that a wave of imaginative activity has arisen in the Absolute Reality. The Absolute, in other words, let us suppose, has limited Itself into a form of consciousness capable of creating an objective world through constructive imagination. This form of consciousness with the world idea within it is a personality (Brahmā). Every thought, as James observes, is the thinker. Every idea is an expression of the individuality. Thus every idea in the Cosmic Personality is a particular manifestation of this personality. The one creator thus by his thought becomes the many creatures. Now let us look upon the manifested world from several points of view. From the point of view of the Cosmic Personality, the entire world is an ideal construction of His (Cosmic) mind. (*Absolute Idealism*). Looked at from the level of the ideas themselves, which are the Cosmic Mind multiplied and differentiated, one idea (personality) is as real a thing as another, for the one is not created by the other—all being created equally by their higher Self, the Cosmic Personality, which is individualized in each of them. (*Realism*). Looking at the world-contents from the point of view of one

personality, we find that the world, though appearing as given, is yet appearing so peculiar and so relative to the individual perspective, that it may be said to be its own peculiar world. (*Solipsism*). All the three kinds of visions may be thus reconciled: Every individual is a particularized Universal. In one sense my world is so peculiar and relative to me that I am led to believe in the ordinary kind of solipsism. My higher personality, however, is a common higher personality of all the individuals who are on a par with me, and so, are as real as I. The world that appears real to me is an actual imagination of my own higher personality. As an individual too, I am a higher and common personality in relation to those into which I have multiplied myself by imagining them as my ideas in my dream. So far as *I*, as the personality of the waking state, am concerned, the dream-world is my idea. But from the point of view of the creatures into which I get multiplied in the dream through my imaginative activity, the world of dream is real. Thus we can reconcile realism with idealism, which Vasiṣṭha says are not two irreconcilable views.

#### 4. *Fatalism or Freedom?*

The growing scientific knowledge of the objective world is day by day revealing that the universe is governed by inexorable mechanical laws (*niyatī*) which no one can violate. Every individual is, accordingly, only a link in the entire chain of the Cosmos, and is completely, we may also say fatally, determined in all its movements, physical as well as psychical. The strength, the size, the colour, and the health of my body are, according to science, dependent upon the latitude, the climate, the food, the atmosphere, etc. My thoughts are determined by the times, the race, the



country and the religion in which I am born. The determinists claim that every line that I am writing at present, with regard to which I feel that I am doing it *freely* of my own accord, can be explained mechanically without bringing in any idea of myself as a free agent. Everything is being done in spite of myself by the agency of some universal causality (*prakṛti*), as Kṛṣṇa teaches in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and as the determinists say in the West. The believers in Fate also think similarly all over the world. Man has no power, they say, to change the course of the events of his life. He has to accept them as they occur in spite of himself. Monotheistic religions like Christianity and Mohammedanism also cannot but believe in determinism or fatalism. For, if God is the Creator and Ruler of the entire world, His will, and not mine, will be done. Even the moral choice of right or wrong conduct on such views is a chimerical belief. Russel's pessimistic attitude expressed in his essay on "Free Man's Worship", the ordinary man's belief that what is to happen will happen, and the Christian and Islamic belief that redemption rests entirely in the hands of God advised by His Son or Minister, are all the consequences of the scientific, popular and religious *fatalism*, accepted by illegitimately curbing the inner demand for unlimited freedom.

There cannot be any denying of the fact that there is not only an inner demand in every creature to realize the most unlimited freedom, but also a feeling that we are really free, however the obsession of a partial philosophy of life may cause us to neglect the demand and to overlook the feeling. There will, therefore, always be, as there has been in the past, a revolt against deterministic metaphysics. And philosophy



will never rest satisfied until fatalism and individual freedom both are given their due place in a higher synthesis.

In the West, in spite of the sway that science and its determinism hold there, the Pragmatists and Humanists are raising their voice against determinism and are denouncing all such kinds of metaphysics that teach that individual freedom is a chimerical belief. Freedom is the presupposition from which they start. If an Absolute God is found to prove the admission of individual freedom absurd, let him, they say, rather be a limited God. If any metaphysical hypothesis does not concede to and explain freedom, which is an immediately revealed fact, let it be reshaped. We cannot question facts discovered by science, but we can question the explanation and interpretation that a scientist attempts to give of them, and can show to him that his observations and explanations are partial. The method of observation of the scientist, they point out, is such that it neglects the individual differences of things. It observes only the average behaviour of things and not their minute peculiarities, which really are the expressions of the inner freedom which the humanist postulates to be pervading even in the inorganic world. The laws of nature according to him are only the established and fixed habits of things, which are at their root plastic and not opposed to indeterminism. They point out that the world itself is in the making, and is being made through the free activity of the individuals. So, monism which is inconsistent with individual freedom is rejected by them. And if reason demands it, they think it advisable to turn a deaf ear to it.

Which, then, of the two views is to be preferred? It would, we think, be a philosophical blunder if we do not give a patient hearing to the demands of reason as well as to the intuition of and craving for freedom, for philosophy is an honest attempt to interpret rationally the entire experience. Freedom has to find a place in a rationally constructed philosophical hypothesis of the world. We do not want a semblance of freedom granted to us by the Absolutistic metaphysics according to which the Absolute realizes Its own purpose through us. The Absolutist of the West who is usually a teleologist cannot let us believe in that kind of creative freedom for which man aspires. There is not much difference between mechanical determinism and teleological determinism, as Bergson has pointed out in his *Creative Evolution*. We are not even satisfied merely with the freedom of choice between several *given* alternatives. There is an inner craving in us to realize complete and unrestricted creative freedom. If any philosophy baffles and disappoints us in obtaining full satisfaction of the innermost cravings of our heart by showing that they are illusions and false hopes, it is the philosophy that is to be given up and not the desire that goads us to perfection. Such a hypothesis cannot be accepted as a theory of life. William James has very rightly remarked: "A philosophy whose principle is so incommensurate with our most intimate powers as to deny them all relevancy in universal affairs, as to annihilate their motives at one blow, will be even more unpopular than pessimism." (*Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, p. 313.) The humanists and pragmatists, we think, have done a great service to the cause of Western philosophy in pointing out that the emotional active needs of men are stronger and more assertive



than the intellectual. Our emotional and active nature will not be satisfied unless a promise of freedom and perfection is granted to every individual in a theory of the universe. The Western Absolute Idealism, so far as it has been presented up to this time, however it may satisfy the intellectual demands of life, does not satisfy the others. The Humanistic and Pragmatic reaction is a sufficient proof of its failure to be the most satisfactory hypothesis. Indian philosophers, however, have been free from these difficulties, because they did not indulge in abstractions. Knowledge in India has always been sought for perfection and happiness, and it has gathered information from every avenue through which it could come, and has synthesized it in a rational manner. According to Indian philosophers, there is no other purpose behind the manifestation of the world than the fructification of the willed efforts of the individuals, or a spontaneous and free sportful creative activity of Reality, which is continued in the same character into all individuals and sub-individuals that are generated by this activity. Even a life after death is postulated by an Indian, not because he is curious to know what happens on the other side of death, not because he is anxious to meet the departed ones, and not because he is afraid of losing his entity, the motives by which the European investigators are actuated, but because he thinks that it is absurd and irrational that in Reality there should be no provision for the realization and fructification of all the wishes and efforts which the individual cherished and made during his life-time, but which could not bear any fruit because of his death. To the positivists, like Comte and Fredrick Harrison, it may be sufficiently consoling that the humanity that the dying man is leaving behind



will enjoy the fruits of the efforts of the dead. But what of the ambitions and desires with which he died? To the Indian mind it looks irrational that anybody should finish his career of existence without his desires having all been satisfied, and that an individual should come into existence without his having willed it so, without his having deserved to come as a result of his own free activity, unless the universe be irrational at its root. But if the universe is irrational in its constitution, we have but to bid a good adieu to all philosophizing.

Every individual must, therefore, be *absolutely free* to determine his fate, to determine which objective world he will be a member of, what powers he will have, and in what environment he will be placed. This must be one of the cardinal principles of every philosophical system. The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha has it, as we have already seen.

But then, an explanation for the apparent facts which have given rise to the conception of fate, determinism, or destiny, and which cannot be absolutely denied, has also to be found out. Indian philosophy in general, and the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha in particular, has found a rational explanation of fate which does not negate freedom. What we call our present fate, the environment in which we are placed, the powers and prosperity that are in our possession are of our own making. We have bound ourselves to have a thing, once we have wished for it, desired it, and strived for it. There is no escape from it, because we have let loose our creative forces that will bring us in contact with the thing, whether we will have it or not. We are bound, determined and fated to undergo a certain kind of experience in accordance with the potency of our

previous free willing, but we are never deprived of our freedom to determine our experience in future, as well as to change the previously determined experiences of the present. Full self-determination of our life and environment, which is taught by Vasiṣṭha, is what reason and life demand.

But, how far the complete freedom of the individual which Vasiṣṭha grants fits in with his Absolute Idealism which even admits of a Cosmic Mind at the root of the universe is a very serious question. It would certainly have been difficult for Vasiṣṭha to plead for the freedom of the individual, if he had admitted any ultimate purpose to be realized by the creative activity of the Absolute, and if he had also believed in only one Time-space order and only one three-dimensioned objective world. There is no final purpose to be realized by the Cosmic Mind in the world. Creation is an act of playful joy. Moreover, the individual is nothing but the Cosmic Mind individualized by its own will which continues in the individual. The individual is now an individual in his own right and begins to determine his own career through his free willing. The first environment of an individual is the result of a previous willing of his in the form of Brahmā, who is the deeper Self of all individuals in a Cosmos; but for the future he as an individual will be responsible. To illustrate this view, we may suppose that A is the Cosmic mind of a particular Cosmos. It wills to be  $\alpha$ , and lo! It becomes  $\alpha$  through the power of its creative imagination. (We must also remember that in becoming  $\alpha$ , A does not cease to be A in this case.) Now,  $\alpha$  is determined by the will of A only so far as it has come to be  $\alpha$ , and no further. If now the  $\alpha$  does not further will to continue its existence as  $\alpha$  by its own



wish, it will dissolve when the potency of the original imagination of A in  $a$  is over. But it shall continue to be, if it further wills to continue its existence, and shall change into any other form,  $a_1, a_2, a_3$ , etc., it will like to change into. The present form is the consequence of the previous willing, but we are fully free to imagine any other form for the future, and there is a guarantee that whatever we imagine to be in the future we shall be, for we are all living and moving in the infinitely Perfect, the fullest of the full Reality, in which there are countless worlds with their own peculiar time-space orders mutually interpenetrating, according to Vasiṣṭha. Take another illustration of the creative activity of a father. There is hardly any purpose behind the creative enjoyment of the parents. It is a mere sportful play in all the species. The son is the father himself in a particular form. The child is determined by the father only so far as he is at present. The father has no purpose of his own to be realized through his son, who is now an individual in his own right. He will have his course of life determined in his own way. He is free to be what he wills. We are the makers of our own future. We have made us what we are by our previous imagining.

A question may further be asked: Wherein lies the identity and continuity of the individual as such? It is the imagination, the mental construction of the future personality in the present individual that constitutes the link. It is the desire to be something that binds him who desires to be to that which is desired to be. There is nothing like an individual "soul" required to bind the two. [Vasiṣṭha will have no objection to William James's view that life is "A stream of consciousness each section of which should know, and knowing bring



to itself and adopt, all those that went before,—thus standing as the representative of the entire past stream" (*Principles of Psychology*, Chap. X), provided that James believes, as the Buddhists believed, that the stream continues even beyond the bridge of death, and also that the stream of thought is flowing on the surface of the calm ocean of the ultimate Reality which is Consciousness.

### 5. *Annihilation or Survival?*

Does the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha give a satisfactory solution of the problem of death? We have already suggested that the view of Vasiṣṭha on the problem is very much in agreement with the modern view based on the evidence of facts collected by the Psychical Research Society. Here we shall consider the problem on purely speculative grounds, and see how far the views of Vasiṣṭha on death are satisfactory.

The first hypothesis that is suggested about death is that the dead totally cease to be. On what grounds is this hypothesis suggested? Does it satisfactorily explain the fact of death in relation to other facts of life? The only evidence that supports this hypothesis is that we do not perceive by any of our physical senses the existence of the dead person. The body is no longer active and alive; it has begun to be decomposed and rotten. And if not buried or cremated, it will vanish into the elements through natural forces acting upon it, for there no longer exists in it the unifying and resisting force that kept it alive formerly. Now, there can be no denying of the fact that the body is dissolved, and nothing else is perceived of the personality. But from this fact it will not follow that the personality no longer exists, unless it is proved that the body, and nothing beyond that, is the personality; and

also that nothing can be said to exist which is not perceived by us. The man who thinks that the dead ceases to be, therefore, assumes that a living being is nothing more than the physical body, and that only the sensible is the existent. The first of these presuppositions is either based upon the second, as the belief that the personality is nothing more than the body is due to our perceiving nothing more than the body with our senses and presupposing that nothing could exist which is not perceived; or there is a confusion in the mind of one who thinks like that, between a mere condition of manifestation and a cause of production. For, it has also been argued in favour of this hypothesis that all the phenomena which are said to constitute the personality over and above the physical body are caused by or are produced of the body and the brain which is a part of the body, forgetting the other possibility that the body or the brain might be merely the condition of the manifestation of these phenomena. This argument, we may point out, is like the one that there is no other cause and source of the broadcasted music beyond the receiving instrument. There was a personality as long as there was a body; now there is no body, therefore, there is no personality, would be arguing like that, as long as my electric bulb was alright there existed an electric current in the world, but now when my bulb is spoiled or broken, there cannot be any current, and so no other bulb can be lighted in this place. Evidently, such arguments are absurd. The absurdity here is again due to the presupposition that the sensible, nay, that which is actually revealed to the physical senses, is existent, and nothing else. There is no necessity of elaborating upon the untenability of this belief. We cannot limit existence to that alone which is perceptible



to the physical senses. The modern science is convincing us that the perceived universe is very little in comparison to that which is not perceived ordinarily by the physical senses. And if we look within us, we shall find that the unperceived is immensely more in existence than the perceived portion of the entire experience. When we cease to be *en rapport* with the external nature with our physical senses, an inner world is opened to us in what we call a dream-experience. A careful study of dream is very necessary for the proper understanding of the personality and the enigma of human life. There is sense-perception in the dream, but the physical senses are closed and are at rest. There is a body active in the dream, but the physical body is at rest. It is free from all that the dream-body is busy about. There is a world full of things and persons for the dreamer, but those things and persons are not exactly the same as the contents of the waking world. Does all this not show that the sphere of the existent and being experienced is much wider than of that which is perceived by the physical senses? The hypothesis therefore that the personality of the "dead" does not exist anywhere after the dissolution of the physical body is not sound. What we usually are sure of in the case of death is not the non-existence of the personality of the dead anywhere, but of the non-manifestation of it through the physical body which is now spoilt like an electric bulb. This is an evident fact that requires no proof.

A refutation of the opposite, however, is not necessarily a positive proof of anything. Are, then, there any positive grounds on which it might be definitely said that the personality of a dead person continues after the dissolution of the physical body? There can be two convincing proofs of the continuity after death; either



the person who is now dead physically but continues to exist somewhere, in some way or other, should inform us with sufficiently convincing evidence amenable to reasonable tests, that he has not ceased to be with the dissolution of the physical body; or one may himself remember his having survived the dissolution of his previous physical body. It is apparent that both these proofs are difficult to get and also difficult to correctly estimate, although people are busy in finding such evidences. We need not here enter into the difficulties of judging the validity or genuineness of these kinds of evidences. There are great scientists who have considered these difficulties in a truly scientific spirit, and yet have declared that "the hypothesis of surviving intelligence and personality,—not only surviving but anxious and able with difficulty to communicate,—is the simplest and most straightforward, and the only one that fits all the facts." (Lodge: *The Survival of Man*, p. 221.) In India recently, Mr. Kekai Nandan Sahai of Breilley has collected a number of cases (Vide, *Reincarnation*—a pamphlet by him), in which the memory of the previous physical existence is to a great extent retained and verified (his own son being one of them). In the face of such facts, and on our previously-arrived-at-conclusion that it is merely dogmatic to say that a personality ceases to exist with physical death, we are led to think that our existence does not end with the end of the physical body; and this is what Vasiṣṭha holds.

This hypothesis is very much strengthened when we study other aspects of our experience, the dream and the sleep states "The study of dream", rightly says Dr. Du Prel, "frees us much more thoroughly from that physiological prejudice than can the investigation of

psychical functions in the waking life." (Du Prel: *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, Vol. I, p. 54.) While a man is asleep his physical activity sinks for the time being below the threshold of consciousness. But the activity of the inner personality, in all its aspects—intellectual, emotional and volitional—is very much heightened, as is evident from the dream-experiences of ours, and from the activity displayed by a somnambulist and by a hypnotized or an entranced person. Dr. Prel's study of sleep has convinced him that "the more the threshold of sensibility is displaced, the more the positive side of sleep would become apparent, producing always new psychical reactions." (*Ibid.*, p. 147.) It means in other words that the more we are free from the bodily consciousness, the more clearly we experience another state of existence. And, it may therefore be that when we are totally free from the body and the physical senses, we may continue to experience and exist in a world the like of which our dreams daily show us, however vaguely it may be. Vaguely, probably because some link ties us with the physical body even when we are very much free from it in dreams.

Thus, to deny existence after physical death is dogmatic. There is some actual evidence in its favour, and it is very much probable that it may be so. Nay, it is also necessary, if the constitution of the world is not irrational. For, as we have already said, it is irrational that our efforts and desires are evaporated into nothing, and are not satisfied in the long run. It is irrational and absurd that a moral, gentle and noble personality is evolved here under hardships and struggles, and with tears only to be broken suddenly at the rock of death. Are all our aspirations for perfection,



omnipotence, omniscience and absolute bliss nothing more than illusion and mockery? Are Christs, Neros and Washingtons all to be levelled by death? Are the martyrs and the condemned murderers sailing in the same boat only to be dashed into nothingness? "Should Kant and Goethe, Buddha and Christ, have laboured and suffered for the race, without thereby at the same time advancing a transcendental subject of theirs, nature would be in the highest degree wasteful." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 223-224.) It cannot be so, if the world is rational. And, unless reason rules the world, science, philosophy, morality and religion are absurdities. Suicide in that case would be the best course of action for a suffering man. But we think the universe is rational, simply because reason is one of the manifested forms of the Reality in man. Reality may be more than rational, but cannot be less.

In general, therefore, we agree with the view of Vasiṣṭha on death, that it does not bring about an end of any individual as long as that individual himself would not like to be dissolved, and that death opens a new world before him which he deserved, in the same way as we wake up in dream when the body is asleep. The change that is brought about by death is, according to Vasiṣṭha as well as according to Du Prel, "not a change of place, but change of perceptual mode." (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 289.) It is not going anywhere else in space, but experiencing a subjectively different world.

6. *Fulfilment or Frustration of Desires?*

Of late there has been much discussion in philosophy on values and their conservation and security in the reality. We do not want here to enter into all the aspects of the problem. We shall only see how far the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha satisfies the demand of our life



that all our values ought to be conserved, that all our desires must find satisfaction, and that all our efforts must be crowned with success in the long run. For, we must remember that this demand is very strong in man, perhaps stronger than the intellectual demand for consistency.

A careful investigation into the various types of religions will reveal that the categories of a particular religion are determined in their concrete nature by the conception entertained by a particular race or people, of the values of life and how they want them to be concerned. God, Heaven or Hell, salvation, etc., are hypostatized values. Why a religion is accepted or rejected by some individual is not usually because it is rational, but because it guarantees him all that he desires. All the conceptions of the ultimate destiny of the individual are coloured by his conception of the most valuable aspect of his existence and of the most desired object of his life. A *Vaiṣṇava* devotee has expressed his wish that he would prefer to be a jackal in the land of *Bṛnda-vana* to being a liberated soul in the sense of Liberation according to the *Vaiśeṣika* philosophers. [Rāmānuja, in his *Commentary* on the *Brahma-sūtras*, criticizes and rejects Saṃkara's conception of Liberation that there will be no experience of the ego or I-ness (*ahamtvā*) in the liberated state, on the plea that "A man desires Liberation and makes efforts to attain it only with the idea that his present state is miserable, and with the hope that in the liberated state he will be happy. But if he comes to learn that in the state of liberation he himself will be no more, he will turn back from such a liberation." (Sri-bhāṣya *Catuh-sūtrī*, edited by Abhyāṅkara, p. 79.) A religion acceptable to an opium-eater must guarantee

to him that there will be ample opium in the heaven for him; a debauchee will gladly accept the conception of heaven where his animal passion will have an unrestricted satisfaction. The prophet that a man would accept is one who does not denounce what he desires and loves.

The place of philosophy in the life of a *thinking* man is almost the same as that of religion in the life of a *believing* man. It has to meet the same demands of life, and its task is more difficult than that of religion in so far as it has to be comprehensive, coherent and consistent. Bradley accepts this view when he writes "Philosophy has to justify all sides of our nature; and this means that all our main cravings must find satisfaction." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 507.) But, as his own philosophy finds it difficult to guarantee the fulfilment of all desires of all individuals, and the conservation of all the values of all individuals, he, instead of admitting the failure of his philosophy, considers the demand, as it is, to be absurd. He says: "But that every desire of every kind must as such be gratified—this is quite a different demand, and is surely irrational." (*Ibid.*, p. 507.) Here Bradley forgets that to the individual who is desiring, his own desire at that moment, however petty, however great or small its object may be, however noble or ignoble it may look to others, is as *warm*, is as imperative, and its object as valuable as any other desire of any body else and its object. If any philosophy makes difference between one and another, and guarantees the satisfaction of one rather than that of another, that philosophy is a partial philosophy and has yet to grow wiser. It cannot meet the universal acceptance, because it does not satisfy all. It is the philosophy of the few whose values it conserves; it is a philosophy of a particular nation, of a



particular country, of a particular time, of a particular type of people, the conservation of the values of which it maintains. It is idle on the part of Bradley to write: "It is idle to repeat, "I want something" unless you can show that the nature of things demands it also." (*Ibid.*, p. 510.) The "nature of things" would certainly be irrational if there would arise any desire in any individual for the fulfilment of which there were no provision in the "nature of things", for, after all, the individual in whose heart the desire surges up is a part of the Reality. If tantalization of our desires is the rule of the universe, or if only those desires will be fulfilled which have been indulged in after calculating the "nature of things", which an ambitious man never does, then all the people of the world up to this time have lived and died in illusion, for the "nature of things" is still not fully known. They have desired and aspired in vain. Man will not be satisfied with such a metaphysics. And, in the West there is a tendency in Pragmatism to discard the view that the reality is a finished thing. However vaguely they may say it, they nevertheless say that the reality is in the making, and that we make it through our desires, thoughts and activities. The Pragmatist is not very clear as to what he really means. But he is quite sure that he is revolting against a metaphysics that does not fully satisfy.

In the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, we have a better solution of the problem than probably in any other religion or philosophy of the world. He assures us that every desire of whatsoever kind of every individual shall be satisfied. All that any individual wants to experience and realize shall be experienced and realized. The stories of the sons of Indu in the *Prakaraṇa* III



of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* and of the *Tapasa* in the second half of the *prakaraṇa* VI illustrate the view of Vasiṣṭha that all desires, however great and unattainable their objects may seem to be, however the "nature of things" may go against them, and however conflicting their consequences be with the "finished reality", shall be fulfilled if they are earnest and sincere. Even merely passing wishes are also to be granted a passing fulfilment. All that we wish to possess and enjoy shall be in our arms, however impossible it may apparently seem to be. A scientist, a philosopher, a politician, and a reformer will see himself crowned with success in his efforts. A lover will be in union with his beloved, and every one will find what he seeks. All that we think valuable will be preserved for us if we wish so.

How can it be so? It shall be so, Vasiṣṭha tells us, because our objective experience is shaped in accordance with our demands, our desires, and our aspirations. We daily experience that many of our wishes which are inconsistent with the facts in the present objective world of the waking experience, are fulfilled in the experience of dream, which so long as it lasts is experienced as the real waking state. Dreams are mostly the objectification and realization of our passing wishes or of those desires that are in conflict with the waking experience. Death, as we have already seen, liberates us from the waking physical experience. Our objective experience after death, according to Vasiṣṭha, is very much like that of a dream, in which we enjoy the objects of our desires or suffer from the objects of our apprehension. For, all wishes and desires, and also fears and apprehensions are potential energies to be actually realized. And they persist to be as long as they are not realized. All our ideas of heaven and

hell, all our conceptions of reward or punishment, and all our desires to possess this or that are actualized in our objective experience after the death of the body, in exactly the same way as in dreams. The dreaming capacity is then released and liberated from the limitations of the body and the world of waking experience, where the nature of things stood in the way of our desires finding satisfaction. There is no common time-space order for all the ideal worlds thus experienced after persons have ceased to be members of this world of waking experience, as all the dreams cannot be measured by the same standard of time-space measurement and cannot be said to be belonging to a common time-space order. Countless such worlds may exist interpenetratingly, with events which may be quite in conflict with those in others at the same time and place, if we can use the expression. All these ideal worlds in which the individual is having full and unrestricted satisfaction of his desires that are incongruent with or impossible to be realized in the world of this time-space order, all these enjoyments, and all these personalities, are nevertheless, as real, as hard facts, and as objectively true as our world of the present waking experience.

Now, when the desires, for the fulfilment of which this world of our present experience was too poor or incongruent, are exhausted by their satisfaction, those desires which were connected with this world and can be fulfilled in this world assert themselves and wake the personality up in this very world in a fresh and appropriate physical body in which all that was achieved with great efforts formerly is preserved or conserved in the form of instincts and tendencies, and in a suitable environment where those desires can be easily satisfied,



Thus nothing valuable and nothing that was desired to be conserved is ever lost to the individual as long as the individual himself does not want to get rid of it through his denying desire. There is an unbroken continuity in the line of perfection, and all the previously acquired stages of progress are conserved in the personality. The individual becomes only what he desires. He realizes whatever kind of salvation he wants. If he wants to preserve his distinct individuality in some *loka* (higher world), as Rāmānuja and other *Vaiṣṇava* teachers would, there is a provision for this in reality, and no one can compel him to be effaced out of existence as an individual. If he is, on the other hand, tired of existing as a separate individual and desires to be dissolved into infinity, he will be dissolved. If he wants to live in conscious identity with the Absolute, he shall also realize that kind of existence. For, according to Vasiṣṭha, we become only what we desire to become; we possess what we desire to possess; and we enjoy what we desire to enjoy. The only check is the check of our thought.

But we must not forget that nothing else but the realization of our Absoluteness can give us the final satisfaction. It is why we continue changing our desires, changing our values and changing ourselves. That alone will be real for us which we value. Let us therefore value that which we want to realize. Things are not valuable in themselves. They are valuable in so far as they give us a promise of happiness and joy. When we have them by our side, the promise is realized to be a false one so far as the ultimate satisfaction is concerned. Then we set our heart on other objects and think them valuable instead of the previous ones. But after some time, when by the inevitable law of the



fulfilment of all our desires, they are in our possession, the same thing happens. We are again disappointed in realizing the promised joy. This is the reason why values change. This impels us to find out the highest value, the Absolute Self, for the sake of realizing which all values are acquired and tested one after another. This is what is suggested by the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha.

### 7. *Whence and Why the Evil?*

It may be asked that, if the nature of the reality is such that all our desires are fulfilled, why is there misery or suffering in the world? The world appears to be a vale of tears rather than a garden of joy. There is pain, there is suffering, there is old age, there is death, and there is failure in the world. These facts cannot be denied by any philosopher so long as he walks on the earth with his eyes open. Vasiṣṭha has recognized them to be actual facts. In the recent philosophy of the West too there is so much attention paid to the dark aspects of life and the world, denoted by the one common name "evil" that it has now become an important duty of a philosopher to account for them, as it was in ancient India, where the main object of philosophy was to find out the root cause of the evil and the remedy for it. (*Vide*, the first stanza of Īśvara-kṛṣṇa's *Sāṃkhya-kārikas*.)

At present there are two main conceptions of evil in the West, that of the Absolute Idealists and that of the Humanists. The first group of thinkers holds that the consciousness of evil is only a partial vision, that evil is merely an appearance, and that in Reality as a whole it is "over-ruled and subserved". Evil, according to them, is not grounded in the Reality as a whole, but is experienced only in the parts of the Reality. How any partial appearance, such as evil,

error, finitude, etc., arise in the Absolute whole is not answered by them. That, they think, is beyond our comprehension. "Why there are appearances, and why appearances of such various kinds, are questions not to be answered." (Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. 511.) The Pragmatists and the Humanists naturally revolt against such a view. They detest the use of the word "appearance" for evil, which according to them is as real as the man or the individual, from whom they start to philosophize like the followers of Protagoras. They denounce the Absolutistic metaphysics downright, because they think that in the Absolutistic philosophy the centre of interest is the Absolute and not the individual for whom evil is ingrained in reality. Evil, they say, is real. No further explanation can be given of it than that it is a real factor in our experience, with which we have to grapple hard. The Pragmatists discard the conception of a perfect, omnipotent and good God, who has hitherto been believed to have been the creator of the world, for, if God is the author of the world, he must have been the author of the dreadful evils of the world like war, pestilence, earthquakes, floods, etc., and of suffering, old age, death, etc., of the living creatures. They recognize evil as a real principle active in the world side by side with the forces that are operative to conquer it. A finite God struggling himself against the forces of Satan, and to a great extent aided by the growing wisdom and power of man, is what satisfies them. It is clear that even by the Pragmatists no further explanation of evil is given than that it is a *fact*, an actuality that cannot be denied. The main concern of the Humanists and Pragmatists is not really to account for and explain



why there is evil, but how it can be overcome; "Not why evil should exist at all, but how we can lessen the actual amount of it." (James: *Pluralistic Universe*, p. viii.) Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan, therefore, while defending the Absolutistic philosophy of the West against the attacks of James remarks: "But if Absolutism fails to account for evils and error (which, he says, are "Mystery" according to Bradley, and an "insoluble puzzle" according to Joachim), pluralism does not fare better." (Rādhā-kṛṣṇan: *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, p. 259.)

When we cast a glance towards Indian philosophy, we find the idea of "evil" treated under the concept of *bondage*. The tendency of Indian philosophers has been to distinguish two states of existence of the Self of living beings, one the *ideal* state in which the individual can exist as free from all evils and sufferings, and the other as *actual* which is full of imperfections, sufferings and undesirable evils. The first is generally called the state of *Mokṣa* (freedom from evil) and the second, *Bandha* (bondage to evil). The problem of evil has generally taken an individualistic turn here on account of the pragmatic tendencies of the Indian mind from the earliest times. Here let us take a bird's-eye view of the various conceptions of bondage offered in Indian philosophy.

According to the Cārvākas, it may be said that bondage is really a bondage to the authority of religion, law and morality. Moral and religious considerations make a coward of man and keep him away from the enjoyments of life. Let us take life as it is, and let us not postpone the present enjoyments for the sake of some non-existent, but wrongly supposed to be existent, state of heavenly or unconditioned bliss. We



end with death. There is no problem of *mokṣa* beyond the present life. This view, it is evident, cannot satisfy man, although there is a grain of truth in it. It is an antithesis to the too much religious obsession which makes a man neglect the comforts that the body legitimately requires.

According to the *Jaina* thinkers, the limitations of life and the consequent misery and sufferings are due to the intermixture of the soul with the forces of matter, both of which have been existing intermixed from time immemorial, without any beginning in time. Yet it is possible through moral and ascetic practices to separate the soul from the kārmiic particles of matter entirely. When the soul is thus freed from matter, it will go up beyond the mundane existence, in a very high region, where it will continue to exist for ever as an omniscient individual free from all the evils of mundane existence. The view does not satisfy the intellectual demand for the Unity of the ultimate Substance. It does not make the sufferer from the evil responsible for his suffering, because the evil is ingrained in the reality from time immemorial and is sufficiently deeply intermixed with the soul. This view does not, also, attribute any meaning and purpose to evil in life. And the method suggested to get rid of the mundane existence is very ascetic and puritanic, full of hardships and difficulties at every stage.

According to the philosophers of the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* schools, evil consists in the soul (which in its essential nature is a pure substance free from all attributes of knowledge, emotion and activity which it acquires during the mundane existence) assuming a body with the senses and uniting with a mind, as a consequence of its previous *karmas* (actions), and thereby suffering

from the misery of life and death. The *samsāra* (round of birth and death) continues as long as the soul is not freed from attachment to the body and mind, and from the binding actions through the knowledge of the real nature of the soul. When this is effected, the soul becomes liberated, and continues to exist in its pure form which is free from all pains and pleasures, and from all attributes that are acquired in the embodied existence including consciousness. It is not explained in this philosophy how such an originally pure soul was at all implicated in the clutches of *karma*, or bondage for the first time, it being considered a sufficient reply that our bondage is beginningless. This idea of freedom from bondage in a state of Liberation which not only will be free from pain but also from every kind of happiness from even the knowledge or consciousness of our existence, is not an idea that can appeal to man. It is an attempt to acquire complete anaesthesia, as it were, and to reduce oneself to a stonelike state of unconscious existence. Man on the other hand wants happiness, positive and unconditional, and never wants that he should cease to be conscious.

According to the early *Mīmāṃsakas*, Jaimini and Śabara, the evil consists in the performance of bad and prohibited actions which are bound to bring suffering to the performers. Freedom from it according to them would be a state of happy heavenly existence brought about by the performance of the actions enjoined upon us by the Scripture. This view looks to be too primitive. It does not take into consideration the fact pointed out by the author of the *Sāṃkhya-kārikas* that the stay in heaven cannot be a state perfectly free from pain, and that this remedy of escaping the evils



of life is not the final remedy, for, the consequences of "good" actions even must last for some time and not for ever. (*Kārika* 2.) So, neither the origin nor the final cure of evil is suggested by the *Mīmāṃsakas*.

The evil of bondage, according to the *Sāṃkhya* philosophers, is due to the want of discriminative knowledge (*aviveka*) between the subject and object (*puruṣa* and *prakṛti*). The former is by its very nature unchanging, inactive, and pure consciousness, which is free in its essential nature from all pleasures, pains or delusion. In the present state, however, it feels its identity with the objective reality (*prakṛti*), which, on account of the forgetfulness by the *puruṣa* of its own true nature and of the attention directed by the *puruṣa* towards it, begins to dance into the many forms of things, senses, mind, ego, the intellect, etc., which are all susceptible to pleasure, pain or dullness; to change and to all kinds of miserable or happy states in heaven or hell. It is really wrong for the subject to attribute to itself the conditions of objects, both of the psychical and physical kind. But it is done for want of discrimination. Discrimination between the two as absolutely separate entities and the consequent aloofness of the subject in its own state of pure conscious experience is the ideal of this philosophical system. No satisfactory answer is given by the *Sāṃkhya* philosophers as to how this false identity between the two, this non-discrimination, originates at all. If the two were essentially distinct entities, when and how did they come to be united? To say that the non-discrimination is beginningless is to evade the question of the origin, and not to answer it. No other character than that of being pure consciousness, unattached to anything, aloof and distinct from all other things, although infinite in extension, is



present in the liberated soul according to this school. This state is realized by abstracting it from all the contents of consciousness, or by stripping off all concreteness from conscious experience. It is, apparently, a way not of conquering the evil but of running away from it.

According to Buddhism, in general, life as such is misery and pain. There is no joy here. Every thing is in perpetual change. The soul postulated by other systems of philosophy in which a resort is sought to escape from the evils of life, is itself found by the Buddhists on analysis to be composed and no exception to the universal law of change. To be something, to will to be something, is itself the root of all sufferings. This *tṛṣṇā* or desire to be is due to *ignorance* (*avidyā*). We do not know that by desiring to be something we are sowing the seed of our further existence which as such is evil. Freedom from all kinds of desires for objects, and negation of the *will to live* through self-denying moral conduct in which respect is paid not to the individuality but to the moral law, is the way of arriving at a state in which individuality, which is changing and composite in its nature, is finally extinguished. This state is called *Nirvāṇa* or extinction of all evils and passions with that of individuality. How the individuals originated, why is there ignorance on account of which we go on weaving a web of prolonged existence here and hereafter, are questions to which no answer can be found in Buddhism. The ignorance is said to be beginningless. The remedy suggested for the evils of life is a medicine that certainly removes the disease, but kills also the patient to insure freedom from relapse. The idea of Buddhistic *Nirvāṇa* is more or less a negative one, of freedom

from all the dark aspects of life. But man does not only seek an escape from the evils of life, but also hankers for positive Joy or Happiness (*Ānanda*). There is certainly a desire in man to escape from the miserable state of existence, but there is also a desire to *be* in some state of existence, where he will be in a blissful state. This positive aspect is wanting, to a great extent, in the Buddhistic metaphysics which lays much emphasis on negation, although in the later Buddhism, signs are not wanting of the influence of the *Upaniṣadic* idea of the Self as *Ānanda* or Bliss.

According to the *Upaniṣads*, to speak in a general way, the root of evil is our ignorance of the fact that we are one with the Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, which is full of infinite knowledge and Bliss. When we know this fact, we partake in the Joy Absolute. "When God is known all fetters fall away." "The knower of the Brahman becomes Brahman." Śaṅkarācārya, therefore, who has systematized the teachings of the *Upaniṣads* into a system of philosophy known as the *Advaita-Vedānta*, thinks that the evil consists in the *ignorance* of the true nature of the Self, which is identical with the Brahman. When through the study of the *Upaniṣads*, thinking over their teachings, and contemplating over their truths, we realize that we are the Brahman, the finitude and the vision of the world, which are both illusory appearances, vanish from the view and we are left not in a negative state of emptiness, but in a state of Perfect Existence, which is Consciousness and Bliss, and is fuller than the fullest one can imagine. But how, why, and when *Ignorance* crept into our Being to make us finite is a question, which not only is not answered by the *Vedantists* but also denounced as an illegitimate question (*ati-prasṅga*).



Thus, no philosophical system of the East or West so far considered has given a quite satisfactory answer to the origin of the evil. The philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, fares better than most of them with regard to the problem. No better answer, after all, can be given as to why we suffer than that because we are ignorant. All our sufferings, miseries, failures, and troubles are certainly due to our ignorance of the true nature of things around us, of our own selves, and of the laws and constitution of the universe. He also tells us that it is more important to know how ignorance is to be removed, that is, how the evil is to be overcome and destroyed, than how, why, and when it originated (IV, 41, 32-34), as William James, whom we have quoted above, has also rightly said.

But the difficulty is that man will never cease to be a metaphysical animal. He cannot rest satisfied with the agnosticism as to the ultimate reason why ignorance or evil is there at all. The main difficulty in the acceptance of evil as an ultimate fact ingrained in the reality, is that the admission of it as an independent power, a cosmic principle like Satan, takes away all hope of victory over it, and also all possibility of its ever being effaced out of existence. For, after all, a reality will ever remain a reality. A force that has defied and limited even God, must be certainly stronger and cleverer than the combined strength and wisdom of all the creatures or individuals in the world. The difficulty of the Monistic systems of philosophy, on the other hand, is to explain why the One Perfect and Infinite Blissful God or the Brahman could become the finite and suffering many, or, if the many are eternally rooted in the all-comprehending and all-embracing Absolute, how could forgetfulness



(ignorance) of this fact occur at all? To say that it is an "insoluble mystery" is giving a death-blow to metaphysics and leaving the intellect unsatisfied for ever. A philosopher, therefore, has certainly to attempt an answer. Moreover, unless we know why and how evil is there, we cannot be able to conceive how to overcome it. To say that the evil is beginningless is to admit actual reality of it.

In the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha we do not come across the conception of a *beginningless ignorance*, which we find in the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhism from which Śaṅkara seems to have borrowed it. *Karma* (binding activity) too is not beginningless according to Vasiṣṭha, as we have already seen. Bondage or evil, according to Vasiṣṭha, is another name for finite existence, the mind or individuality itself. Ignorance (*avidyā*) is also a name for it. It is also called *karma*. To be an individual is to be limited; it is to hedge a wall of neglect or non-recognition of the Whole round the centre of interest in a particular portion or aspect of the Absolute Whole. To attend to a particular point is to neglect the rest. And we *are*, for the time being, only that to which we give our full attention. No body else forces us to attend to anything. It is a voluntary game which we may play or not. It has a beginning and an end. But as every concave has its convex side, so the limitation of our interest to *here* and *now* has the other side involved in the very act of limitation, namely, the passing away the rest of the Reality, ever present in the total experience, into the subconscious. The present day psychology holds that the original datum of cognitive experience is a continuous whole, in which we make differentiations in accordance with our interests. There is really no limit to the presentation-continuum,

but only that much of it constitutes my reality as is above the threshold of my consciousness; and out of that too that is more real to me in which I am emotionally interested or which has value for me. The rest is neglected. It is in some such manner that a mind or individuality takes its rise in the Absolute according to Vasiṣṭha. A centre of interest, a point of conscurring activity, is *spontaneously* (*Svabhāvataḥ*) and without any ulterior motive, fixed in the ever infinite and perfect Absolute like the springing up of a whirl in an ocean. From the point of view of this centre the total Absolute Experience appears split up into two aspects, one in which the individual (the centre) is interested, and so, real to it, and the other in which the individual is not interested, and so, unreal to the individual. But there cannot be an actual separation between the two aspects of the entire Experience except for the individual. As the centre of interest of the individual continues shifting, his experience goes on changing. Imagining new and new forms in the objective world is but the changing of the centre of interest. And we cannot but imagine new forms for our objective experience, because the entire infinite Experience is immanent in every individual and on account of this fact there is a revolt in the individual against being satisfied with a particular form of experience and a demand to have other forms of experience in the field of consciousness. This is the reason why there is no final satisfaction of desire in having this or that object. As long as we shall continue to desire particular objects, our desires will bring us no rest or final peace, for, objects will be infinite in number and kind and there is a craving in us for the infinite. This is the reason why we suffer. This is why we cannot be happy in



this world. This is why, in spite of our possessions, achievements and enjoyments, we always feel poor. No doubt, we always have, early or late, what we want, what we strive for, and what we earnestly desire. But by the time we get it, our centre of interest has shifted to something else, and so, we no longer are satisfied with the attainment of the objects of our previous desires. We do not wait to enjoy what we have ourselves attracted towards us. This is why there is discord, inharmony, unhappiness, etc., in the world.

This state of affairs will continue to be experienced as long as there is interest in particular objects and desire to be this or that, and attachment to this or that, for, there will be a perpetual revolt from within against satisfaction with the particular part when the Whole is ours. Want of happiness is the sign of this revolt. There is a need also of this revolt, otherwise no one would aspire to be perfect. Thus, evil is necessary, otherwise the glory of the Absolute which is our very Self, the deep ocean behind the bubble of our being, would remain hidden from the view of those who are interested in partial and poor aspects of It. The vision of the Whole, the infinite Self, will shine above the threshold of consciousness only when we give up our limited interests and become interested in the Whole and constantly imagine ourselves to be nothing less than the Whole. No external force other than our own will make us choose what we shall become. This, in brief, is the view on evil and victory over it, suggested by the study of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*. How far it is satisfactory, let the reader judge. We can only say that beyond this it is difficult for human intellect to go.



8. *What am I?*

"Know thy-Self" is a very old exhortation of the wise men of all ages and climes. And knowing the Self appears to be an easier task than knowing the external world, for the latter is presented to us only so far as our senses reveal it to us. What there may be behind the sensible in the external world ever remains hidden from us. But probably there is an agreement as to what the external world is so far as it is revealed to us, but there is a great divergence of opinion amongst the great thinkers of the world as to what the Self is. A big volume can be filled if only a mention is made of the various views held by eminent thinkers on the nature of the Self. There is hardly any space for us to exhaustively deal with it here. We shall only refer to a few typical instances of this divergence of views held in the East as well as in the West.

Descartes starts his enquiry to find out truth by doubting everything that the commonsense or the previously existing thought of the West took for granted. In doubting everything, he discovers that the doubter is presupposed in all doubting, and therefore cannot be doubted to exist. Doubting is thinking. I think therefore I am. ("*Cogito ergo sum*".) The discovery of Descartes which consists in knowing that no one can doubt his own existence because he is presupposed as a doubter, although a very old truth, is the starting point of Modern Philosophy. St. Augustine long before Descartes thought "To doubt my existence is to assert my existence." (Vide, Cushman: *Beginner's History of Philosophy*, Vol. I. Chap. XVI.) We find the same idea expressed by Śaṅkara in his *Commentary on the Brahma-sūtras* (II, 3, 7): "It is not possible to deny

the existence of the Self, for it is the very essence of him who denies".

But, *what* am I?—is the next and more important question. Descartes comes to the conclusion that the self is a *thinking Substance*. He did not examine the idea of substance critically. Hume questioned whether there was any *substance* like the self. His introspection, Hume said, revealed no such entity as an enduring, continuing and identically the same, spiritual substance within him, but only a congeries of sensations, impressions, memories, feelings, etc. He discovered no Self "other than a bundle or collection of different perceptions which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement." Exactly in the same manner, long before Hume, did the Buddhist thinkers repudiate the idea of "Self" (*Ātman*) as a spiritual substance which was postulated by the *Naiyāyikas* as the thinker, doer, and feeler. The self for the older Buddhists is only a bundle (*skandha*) of the psychical states which are ever in flux, but are held in unity as mind (*cittam*). There is no doubt that so far as the thoughts, ideas, feelings and interests are concerned, there is a perpetual flux, a constant change within ourselves. And whenever one seeks to find the Self with the help of ordinary introspection, he will stumble at this or that particular and passing thought. Hume, James and Buddhists are so far quite correct. But as Kant in the West and Sāṃkara in India pointed out, the changing multiplicity of ideas, sensations, feelings, etc., alone are not sufficient to explain all the facts and aspects of our inner life. Both of them point out that these changing psychical states are not the Self. The Self is the Subject which unifies and apperceives these states, and without the



presupposition of which no unity, which is as much a fact of inner experience as the multiplicity of the ideas, nor consciousness of changing states, could have been possible. To seek for the Self in the changing states of the mind, both of them say, is certainly wrong. The Self is the unifying Subject that can never be made an object, can never be presented as a thought, sensation or feeling. It is therefore absurd to regard it as something known in the ordinary sense. Psychology cannot observe it, but, as Ward suggests, must presuppose it. Buddhists, Hume and James who have repudiated the popular idea of the Self have done a great service to the problem, in so far as they have convinced us that a search for the Self in the changing states of the mind, down from the *me* or ego to the bodily states and feelings, cannot give us the Self. Truly indeed, because the search for the Self is not for the changing aspect of ourselves, nor for the plurality of ideas within, nor even for that which can be the object of our knowledge. It is for the permanent in us, for the unity within, and for the Subject which knows every thing else. When a philosopher says that there is no permanent entity found within his mind or in the objects outside, he is quite right in so far as it goes. But to conclude that permanence and unity can nowhere be found, because they have not been found in the objective side of our experience—both mind and matter—is absurd. Experience is inexplicable without the presupposition of a Permanent Unity. If we have not found where the Permanent Unity exists, we must only confess that we have not found it, and should not deny its existence. It is not only dogmatic to deny the existence of what is presupposed in all our experience, but also an act of philosophicide, if we can use



the expression. If we are honest thinkers, let us say that our knowledge is not yet complete, that we have still to learn more and more. Lodge has rightly said, "The assertions of men of genius are often of value: their denials seldom or never." (Lodge: *Making of Man*, p. 24, footnote.)

What am I then, when the term "I" stands for the Ultimate Subjective Unity? For, after all it is the "I" that endures amidst all the changes of personality; it is the "I" that unifies all the discrete many that compose the psychical and the external world of my experience; and it is the "I" which is presupposed in all experience. What is the character of the "I"? Before finding out the actual character of this "I", let us be sure of a few points in this connection. The search for the "I" is the search for the permanent or the continuous. We must not, therefore, expect to find it in the varying and changing factors of our experience. It is a search for the ultimate Unity within, we should not therefore expect to find it as one of the many contents of our experience. And because it is a search for the ultimate Subject of our experience, we should not expect to find it out amidst the objective world and amidst those things and ideas that can be presented. The search is no doubt a difficult one. Many philosophers, specially in the West, have faltered in the search for the Self, simply because they neither understood what they were in search after, nor where to seek for it. It is to the great credit of the *Vedānta* thinkers that they alone grasped well the problem of the Self, and they alone answered it more satisfactorily than any other philosopher of the East or West.

[The great psychologist James sums up his discussion on the problem of Self by saying "Personality

implies the incessant presence of two elements, an objective person, known by the passing subjective Thought and recognized as continuing in time." (*Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 371.) The main difficulty that lies in this conclusion is how a "passing" subjective thought could be recognized as "continuing in time". How can "I", the unchanging background of all the changing "*me-s*" be "a Thought, at each moment different from that of the last moment". (*Ibid.*, p. 401.) It is a very simple truth pointed out by the author of the *Bhāmati*, the great Vācas-pati Miśra, that "what varies not nor changes in the midst of things that vary and change is different from them (*vyāvartamāneṣu yad anuvartate tat tebhyo bhinnam*)". The "I", therefore, which is felt as continuing in time must be distinguished from that which passes. It cannot be one of the series of passing thoughts, but behind and beyond the series. We may not of course be able to separate the passing *me-s* from the enduring "I", simply because it is a factor that cannot be thought away from any passing *me*. But at any rate we can determine its character by negating from it all the passing *me-s*. Here it may be pointed out, as Kant actually did point out, that it may be that this unity of apperception may not have any existence apart from its function of unifying the passing sensations or ideas. There is no fear like that, for, there are other levels of our experience in which the passing *me-s* of the ordinary waking consciousness are altogether absent, but the Self is still felt to be continuing in the same way as it does in the waking experience.

Our concrete personality, which is called the *me* by William James, may be analysed into several factors: the physical *me* (*anna-maya*), the sensitive and appetitive



*me* (*prāṇa-maya*) the thinking and willing *me* (*viñāna-maya*), and the feeling *me* (*ānanda-maya*), as James Ward (See Ward: *Psychological Principles*, Chap. XV, Section I) and the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* have suggested. Which of them can be or cannot be regarded as the Self, or the real "I" as distinguished from *me* or "I" of the moment will depend upon which one of them endures or does not endure in all the levels of our experience, which we often wrongly suppose to be identical with only one level or aspect of it, namely, the ordinary waking experience. Hindu philosophers have taken the entire experience into consideration in forming a metaphysical theory. They have observed four main kinds of experience: waking, dream, deep sleep and *samādhi*. At one time or other of our existence we are in one or the other of these four states of experience. Our Self should not be only that which endures throughout our waking existence, but also throughout all the various kinds of experience in which we exist this or that time. If any factor of our personality ceases to be experienced in any one of these states, it cannot claim to be our Self. For it is absent when we are present. Our existence cannot be, on the other hand, denied in any kind or level of experience, for any kind of "experience without an experient is unintelligible", as Ward points out. Ward further thinks: "It is the I—not the Me—that . . . is essential to any experience, while the Me is essential to only some." (*Psychological Principles*, p. 379.) Another consideration that Vasiṣṭha and the *Vedantists* have rightly kept in view is that all those factors of my personality that can at one time or other be made the objects of experience, that is, can be observed externally or introspectively have to be discarded as the not-Self.



For, the search for the Self, as we have already pointed out is the search for the Ultimate Subject of our experience, and as Ward says, "there would be certainly a difficulty, if we maintained that the subject of experience could ever be the direct object of its own experience." (*Psychological Principles*, p. 380.)

Now a careful study of the various kinds of experience will convince us that almost all the factors of our objective personality or *me* pointed out above are contingent. They cease to be experienced in this or that state of experience. The "*anna-maya*" (physical) *me* which is lying in the bed is not experienced in dream; the "*prāṇa-maya*" (the sensitive and appetitive) *me*, the "*mano-maya*" (the thinking and willing) *me*, and the "*vijñāna-maya*" (the intellectual) *me*, all are absent from the experience of deep sleep in which nothing but vague feeling of unique pleasure forms the content of our experience; and in a higher mystic experience, called *samādhi*, "which a truly scientific psychology should no longer continue to ignore" (Woods: *The Self and Its Problems*, p. 136), even this vague feeling of pleasure (the "*ānanda-maya*" or the feeling *me*) is changed into the clear experience of Blissful Existence, in which no duality is experienced, and the subject and the object exist as if eternally united in the Unity of experience which is above the distinction. Throughout this variation and dropping of the *me-s* the Self continues as *awareness* or consciousness (*samvid*), which never changes although its objects change. Consciousness is therefore declared to be the essential character of the Self by Vasiṣṭha and the *Vedantists*, as well as by the *Sāṃkhya* philosophers. There is no time when the Self ceases to be conscious. The objects of consciousness vary and change, but

consciousness as such does not cease to be, does not change. For, if consciousness itself suffers changes, they must be known by consciousness itself. Change must be in the objects and not in consciousness, for the latter is presupposed as the witness of the change, which would remain unknown otherwise. Green rightly observes "Neither can any process of change yield a consciousness of itself, which, in order to be a consciousness of change, must be equally present to all stages of the changes; nor can any consciousness of change, since the whole of it must be present at once, be itself a process of change . . . ; within the consciousness itself there can be no change." (Green: *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 23.) And, "No one and no member of a series of related events can be the consciousness of the series as related. Nor can any product of the series be so either." (*Ibid.*, p. 21.)

*Vedantists* argue that the Self or consciousness does not cease to be even in dreamless deep sleep. Their argument is summarized by Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan as: "Even in dreamless sleep there is the Self, for when one rises from it one is aware that one had good sleep undisturbed by dreams. This he knows from memory. Since memory is only of presentations, the bliss of sleep and the consciousness of nothing must have been presented during the sleeping state. If it is said that the absence during sleep of disquiet and knowledge is only inferred from the memory of the state before sleep and perception of the state after it, then it is replied that we cannot infer anything the like of which is not presented. If it is said that a negative concept cannot have any percept answering to it, and therefore the absence of knowledge and disquiet is only inferred, it is said in reply that absence of knowledge, etc., to



be inferred must be conceivable, i.e., must have been directly perceived during their absence. So we have during dreamless sleep direct consciousness of the absence of knowledge and disquiet. In that state the empirical mind is inactive and pure consciousness alone is present." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, pp. 478-479.)

Consciousness does not cease to be not only throughout the various levels or changes of experience undergone in a life-time, but even throughout the eternity. The author of the *Devi-Bhāgavata* argues that consciousness cannot be said to have a beginning or an end, for, "Never has the cessation of consciousness been experienced; if it is asserted that it has been, the experiencer himself stands behind as the embodiment of consciousness". (*D.B.*, III, xxxii, 15-16.) The idea is that we cannot say that consciousness does not exist at any time unless *we know* that it does not really exist. But knowing presupposes consciousness. It will certainly be absurd to think that consciousness comes into existence or comes to an end at any time, for there will be no data for such a supposition. For, "It is here at length that being and knowing meet." (*Ward: Psychological Principles*.) Moreover, to evolve consciousness from that which had it not, would be another absurdity. For, consciousness "is unique". (*Green: Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 171.) "Consciousness shines in its own light." (*Ibid.*, p. 172.) Green also comes to the conclusion: "Consciousness does not arise out of Nature. . . . Consciousness is never 'evolved'. It is that which is presupposed by evolution; that failing which there would be no single universe and no evolution at all." (*Ibid.*, p. 175.) William James is also constrained to think: "If evolution is to work smoothly, consciousness in some shape must have



been present at the very origin of things." (*Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 149.) To escape dogmatism, therefore, we have to accept that Consciousness knows no beginning and no end. "This self-luminous consciousness neither rises nor sets throughout the months, years, small and great ages past or to come", thinks the author of the *Pañca-dasī*. (I, 7.) It is always the same. The Self, therefore, is Consciousness that endures throughout all the changes of personality, and throughout all times past and present. The *Sāṃkhya* and the *Vedānta* thinkers as well as Vasiṣṭha hold this view with little differences. But the problem of Self does not end here with Vasiṣṭha and the *Vedānta* philosophers of the *Advaita* school.

The *Sāṃkhya* philosophers who share with the *Vedāntists* the view that the Self, or *Puruṣa* as the former call it, is the pure consciousness divested of all objective factors of the personality, are nevertheless pluralists with regard to the number of the ultimate Selves, and dualists with regard to the quality of the ultimate principles at the root of the universe. They hold that there is a plurality of such selves (*puruṣas*) in the world, and quite distinct and different from them there is a common ground of objectivity (the *Prakṛti*), the various evolutes and forms of which enter as factors in the total personality of ours. All that we have called the *me* in one or the other form, is according to the *Sāṃkhya* thinkers a form of this objectivity with which the Self (*puruṣa*) has wrongly identified itself. Through metaphysical analysis and discrimination the self will be found to be entirely separate and altogether distinct in nature from the objective or empirical *me*, it will ever rest aloof in its own state of self-illumination, as an individual in itself.

The *Vedāntists* and Vasiṣṭha, however, discard this duality and plurality of *Sāṃkhya*. Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan argues rightly against the *Sāṃkhya* plurality of the *puruṣas* or selves: "There does not seem to be any basis for the attribution of distinctness to the *Puruṣas*. If each *Puruṣa* has the same features of consciousness, all-pervadingness, if there is not the slightest difference between one *Puruṣa* and another, since they are free from all variety, then there is nothing to lead us to assume a plurality of *puruṣas*. Multiplicity without distinction is impossible." (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II.) Vasiṣṭha thinks it irrational that there should be ultimate duality between the subject and object of our experience. They must have, according to him taken their root from the same Common Ground of Existence, which is the Whole that embraces the two within Itself. That Ground is the Unity of not only the subjective and objective factors of our experience, but also a Unity of all the Selves, in which It finds expression. It is needless to say that Reason demands the existence of a Universal Consciousness as the deepest reality within us as well as within the objective world. "The Uniform order of Nature and our knowledge of that order", Green rightly says, "have a common source in a spiritual principle." (*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. xiii.) Prof. Rādhā-kṛṣṇan also says very emphatically: "The fundamental fact of a Universal Consciousness is the presupposition of all knowledge" (*Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 306); and "Self, as Universal Consciousness, is to be admitted, if experience is to be rendered intelligible." (*Ibid.*, p. 159.) Sāṃkara and his followers have strongly urged for the identity between the Universal Consciousness and the individual self. But Sāṃkara has not given any rational grounds for the identity. His only ground



is the statements of the *Upaniṣads*, like "*Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati*", with regard to which he says: "It is not possible that one can attain identity with another altogether distinct." (*Sāṃkara Bhāṣya on Tait. Up.*, II, 8, 15.) Elsewhere he says: "If the individual souls were different from the Highest Self, the knowledge of the Highest Self would not imply the knowledge of the individual soul, and thus the promise given in the *Upaniṣads*, that through the knowledge of One reality, everything is known, would not be fulfilled." (*Sāṃkara Bhāṣya on the Brahma-sūtras*, I, 4, 20.) In fact, if the individuals were not at root One, knowledge, morality, love and organization would not be possible in the world. There would have been no system in the Universe, and no Law in Nature. Vasiṣṭha, therefore, is right when he holds that the Ultimate Self of all is the Absolute, from which all spring up, in which all live, and to which all return. So also according to the *Upaniṣads*, "I am the Brahman" (*Aham Brahma asmi*). (*The Bṛhad-aranyaka Upaniṣad*, 2-4, 10.)

#### 9. Reality or Unreality of the World?

The doctrine that "the world of experience vanishes in and before the truly real" (Windelband: *An Introduction to Philosophy*, p. 80), is called acosmism in Philosophy. Our philosopher Vasiṣṭha, as we have already seen, holds a similar view. The world-appearance with all its limitations, objects, and concepts is only relatively real to an equally unreal mind. Apart from the vision of a mind, there is no world. The Absolute as such does not experience any of the objects as we experience them. The entire world with all its contents is an appearance in a finite centre of consciousness, whether that centre be cosmic or individual. When the centre expands into the Absolute Circle, the world



vanishes from its vision. Let us now try to see how far this view is tenable in the light of modern thought.

What is real and what is unreal?—is a very important question. How the question at all arises is described by James: "The whole distinction of real or unreal . . . is thus grounded on two mental facts—first, that we are liable to think differently of the same; and second, that when we have done so, we can choose which way of thinking to adhere to and which to disregard." (James: *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, p. 290.) It is exactly in this way that the question arises, whether the objective world is real or unreal. For, there are two different ways of looking at it: one, as it is known to us at present and, second, as it may be apart from our knowledge of it, and at all times. Now, what is regarded as real by me? "Any object", James points out, "which remains uncontradicted is *ipso facto* believed and posited as absolute reality" (*Ibid.*, p. 289); and further he says: "*Each world whilst it is attended to* is real after its own fashion; only the reality lapses with the attention." (*Ibid.*, p. 293.) Speaking about what every individual takes to be real in spite of there being other possibilities, James says: "Whatever excites and stimulates our interest is real" (*Ibid.*, p. 295), and sums up the whole psychology of belief in one concept: "The *fons et ergo* of all reality, whether from the Absolute or practical point of view, is thus subjective, is ourselves. . . . As thinkers with emotional reaction, we give what seems to us a still higher degree of reality to whatever thing we select and emphasize and turn to with a will." (*Ibid.*, p. 297.) Schiller similarly holds: "In this selection of 'real' reality our interests, desires, and emotions mentally play a leading part. . . . Individual minds differ as greatly in their acceptances

of 'facts', as in other aspects. . . . Without a process of selection by us, there are no real facts for us, and this whole process is immensely arbitrary." (Schiller: *Studies in Humanism*, pp. 187-188.) "The real external world is the pragmatically effective part of our total experience." (*Ibid.*, p. 202.) From these considerations Schiller comes to a very important conclusion that "Real and 'unreal' are really distinctions of value *within experience*; the 'unreal' is what may be safely ignored, and the 'real' is what it is better to recognize." (*Ibid.*, p. 480.) "Our pragmatic realities need not to be ultimate." (*Ibid.*, p. 475.)

From these psychological considerations it follows that the objective world of any individual is real only in relation to his subjective interests, apart from which it may present quite a different appearance. There are as many worlds as the individuals with varying interests and purposes, and they change in accordance with the subjective changes of their experiences. This is why the Humanists hold that reality is in the making. The world of one individual is in its major part unreal to another, and of the same individual the present world is unreal at some time or other, when his interests and emotions are entirely different. The commonness of the world of many individuals is due only to similarity of interest and value. There may be countless individuals here and now so very different from us in their attitude and subjectivity that their worlds are totally unreal to us and ours totally unreal to them. A slight change in our vision changes the entire world. The real world of dream is totally unreal when the centre of interests is directed from the mental towards the physical personality. A little change in the threshold of consciousness determined by our interest

will open an entirely new world, which was unreal before, and will efface out of vision that which was formerly real. There can be no doubt that if our vision could be an absolute vision with the widest possible interests and universal love, the world will not be experienced by us then in the same manner as it is experienced now. Why should we then suppose that the world which is real to us, the particular and finite centres of interests, is also real to the Absolute Experience. In the Experience of the Absolute, the facts that I interpret as my particular real world must be presenting themselves differently. A study of the same facts differently interpreted in waking and dream consciousness will probably make the contention intelligible. A slight scratch, for example, on the physical body, lying in bed, may be interpreted as a real cut of a sword by the dreaming personality. A very little weight put upon the physical body may be interpreted by the dreaming personality as being pressed heavily by a huge rock. Many other wonderful experiments of this sort can be made to convince one that what is interpreted as a real world may be experienced and interpreted in an entirely different manner in another order of existence. An hour of waking consciousness can be realized as a whole life-time by the dreaming personality. Our real time and space may probably be mere moments and points in some other grade or type of experience. Our real world, therefore, must be thought to be real only in relation to us, in whatever grade of experience we may be. And it is psychologically absurd to expect it to be real in the same sense in the Absolute Experience. It may be present in the Absolute in so entirely a different manner, that it is hardly correct for us to say that the world that is real to us is real to



the Absolute in the same manner. Acosmism is therefore a doctrine against which psychology cannot say anything. Psychology on the other hand gives a support to it. Even a great physicist of the modern times comes to a conclusion in one of his famous works, which gives very much support to the doctrine of Vasiṣṭha: "The absolute world is of so different a nature, that the relative world, with which we are acquainted, seems almost like a dream." (Eddington: *Space, Time and Gravitation*, p. 44.)

Going deeper than the psychologists do usually, into the epistemological examination of the objective world of our experience from which our subjective interests, as the psychologists point out, create a "real world" of psychology, we learn that the world of our experience is so different in nature from the real-world-without-mind that our experience seems to be nothing more than a dream. With a slight change in our senses with regard to their number or constitution, this objective dream of ours would change immensely. It will become quite another to a differently constituted mind. This is not inconceivable. Even here and now there might be experienced several kinds of worlds existing simultaneously and interpenetratingly with one another, yet quite unreal to the minds differently constituted from those to which they are real. If all of us could possess, for example, X-ray sight, our world would be found inhabited not by bodies of the nature we see, but by skeletons merely. How can we then expect that the Absolute Consciousness, which is very much different from our present consciousness, would be conscious of things as we are conscious of them; that the world in the Absolute Experience would be as it is in ours, who are limited forms of the Absolute, viewing

it in our own way and from our own particular point of view? In the Whole things must be present in a much different way, and probably in so different a way from that in which they are present to us, that we can safely say that the world real to and experienced by us is unreal to and is not experienced by the Absolute. "The Absolute Consciousness of the Whole", as Kingsland points out, "would be the unconsciousness of *anything*; it would be the absence of any objective universe." (Kingsland: *Rational Mysticism*, p. 371.) That the vision of an objective world is relative to the activity of the mind, that it is absent when the activity of the mind is absent, as Vasiṣṭha points out, is evident from the fact that no objective world is experienced when the mind comes naturally to rest in deep sleep, and is brought to rest in *samādhi*. Absolute as such, in itself, is the deepest Reality, the Ocean of Consciousness, within which waves of minds rise and fall, but as a whole neither rises nor falls. It is, as Pramatha Nātha Mukhopādhyāya puts it, "level of no stress, zero potential, absolute homogeneity, all consciousness, all being, and all bliss." (*Approaches to Truth*, p. 420.) How can we then think that our world is real to the Absolute?

It may however be objected that the world or even the countless worlds and the minds to which they are relative do not and cannot exist outside the Absolute. And when they are in the Absolute, how can their reality be denied? It is no doubt true that they exist within the Absolute, a fact which Vasiṣṭha does not deny, but they cannot be said to be existing there in the form we experience them. The Absolute being the Ultimate Source of all these relative appearances and of many others, their opposites and antithesis, all the



multiplicity of appearances gets fused and blended into a homogeneous Whole. Therefore, the world as we see it is an appearance relative to us alone. This is what Vasiṣṭha teaches. This is what some of the *Upaniṣads*, some of the *Mahā-yāna* Buddhists, Gauḍa-pāda, Śaṅkara and other *Advaita Vedāntists* also teach.

#### 10. *Concluding Remarks:*

The general approach to some of the problems of philosophy attempted above, on which Vasiṣṭha has expressed his views, brings us to the conclusion that the views of Vasiṣṭha, in whatever manner they might have been arrived at, appear to be rationally sound and practically useful. There is no doubt that there are many problems of life that he has not touched upon, many that he has only vaguely handled, and also many which he has clumsily and at times wrongly solved. But on the whole, we have no hesitation in saying that Vasiṣṭha, whether he was a historical or a mere legendary personage (in which case we might say the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*), deserves a place not only among the great philosophers of India, but also of the world. His philosophy, which we have the privilege to put for the first time in a systematic and comprehensive form before the world, however unsatisfactorily it may be, deserves to be studied as much as of any other thinker of the past, not only as a relic of ancient Indian culture, but also as a body of valuable contributions to philosophy and as an ennobling creed of life.

But, there are many serious defects in the presentation of this philosophy in the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, for which it has suffered oblivion for so many centuries. The most obvious of all is the want of a systematic presentation of the doctrines. The *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, as we



have already said, is a forest of philosophy and not a garden of it. There is too much of repetition of the same views, which is due to the want of system. There is no serious attempt made to be consistent with what has already been said in many places. In other places there is confusion of points of view from which apparently contradictory and conflicting statements are made, which the reader finds very difficult to reconcile. There is no fixed terminology; words change their meaning in different places. Almost all statements are made dogmatically, although there is a constant attempt to illustrate them by way of examples. There is hardly an attempt anywhere to state the opposite views of other philosophers and to examine or criticize them.

All these defects are, however, compensated by some very important merits of the work so far as the presentation of the philosophical doctrines is concerned. The entire work is free from the tendency of defending the doctrines by quoting Scriptures in support, as it was doggedly pursued by the later *Vedāntic* philosophers of the various schools. It is also free from the hair-splitting, yet proving-nothing, arguments which abound in the works of later *Naiyāyikas*. Unlike many other thinkers who give very little or no information, in spite of troubling the reader with complicated, high-sounding and unintelligible expressions, the author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* reveals very deep and significant facts of life in a clear, simple and easy manner.

The philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*, we must not forget, is not a philosophy in the ordinary and usual sense of the term. It is not arrived at by discursive thinking, but through a higher realization of life. *Vāsiṣṭha* does not give us a logic of it, but a vision

only. And, it is a vision rather than logic that we require in this age.

How far the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha is original is very difficult to determine. We have already mentioned that in the philosophy of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* we find a synthesis of all that was best in the *Upaniṣads*, *Sāṃkhya*, *Yoga* and Buddhism, so far as general philosophy is concerned. Originality in philosophy lies not so much in creating anything new, but in synthesizing the already existing views in a higher and satisfactory manner of one's own, the synthesis itself being a new one. This we find successfully done by Vasiṣṭha.

Apart from its soundness as a system of philosophy, in so far as we may call it so, it may be safely said that, if accepted as a creed of life, the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha will exercise a very healthy influence on life. It will widen our outlook; will free us from many harmful superstitions, narrow ideas, and wrong cravings; it will make one feel that he is the maker of his own fate, responsible for his own condition and circumstances, and powerful enough to come out of all miserable plights; it will raise one up in the scale of existence by inspiring him to be great; and it will enable one to live in the "Kingdom of Heaven" here and now. It will make one a better citizen of the world by freeing one from the prejudice of caste, creed, sex or race. It will enable one not only to live happily, but also to die happily. The author of the *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha* indeed did not exaggerate when he wrote: "By repeated study of this work and by constant practice of its philosophy, one gets highest type of intellectual enlightenment, becomes a great and noble citizen and attains Liberation in this

very life." (II, 18, 36; III, 8, 13; II, 18, 8; III, 8, 15.)<sup>1</sup> And if, as the Pragmatists say, utility is the test of truth, the philosophy of Vasiṣṭha, has much truth in it.

<sup>1</sup> एतच्छास्त्रधनाभ्यासात्पौनःपुन्येन वीक्षणात् ॥

बोधस्यापि परं बोधं बुद्धिरेति न संशयः ॥

परा नागरतोदेति महत्त्वगुणशालिनी ॥

जीवन्मुक्तत्वमस्मिन्स्तु श्रुते समनुभूयते ॥



## APPENDIX I (a)

EXTRACTS FROM THE MINOR WORKS OF SĀṂKARA COMPARED  
WITH CORRESPONDING EXTRACTS FROM *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*

## विवेकचूडामणिः

वदन्तु शास्त्राणि यजन्तु देवान्कुर्वन्तु कर्माणि भजन्तु देवताः ।  
आत्मैक्यबोधेन विनाऽपि मुक्तिर्न सिध्यति ब्रह्मशतान्तरेऽपि ॥ ६ ॥

वस्तुसिद्धिर्विचारेण न किञ्चित्कर्मकोटिभिः ॥ ११ ॥

अर्थस्य निश्चयो दृष्टो विचारेण हितोक्तिः ।  
न खानेन न दानेन प्राणायामशतेन वा ॥ १३ ॥

वस्तुस्वरूपं . . . स्वेनैव वेद्यं न तु पण्डितेन ॥ ५६ ॥

बन्धमोचनकर्ता तु स्वस्मादन्यो न कश्चन ॥ ५३ ॥

अविद्याकामकर्मादिपाशबन्धं विमोचितुम् ।  
कः शक्नुयाद्विनाऽऽत्मानं कल्पकोटिशतैरपि ॥ ५७ ॥

न योगेन न सांख्येन कर्मणा नो न विद्यया ।  
ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वबोधेन मोक्षः सिध्यति नान्यथा ॥ ५८ ॥

अज्ञानसर्पदष्टस्य ब्रह्मज्ञानौषधं विना ।  
किमु वेदैश्च शास्त्रैश्च किमु मन्त्रैः किमौषधैः ॥ ६३ ॥

न गच्छति विना पानं व्याधिरौषधशब्दतः ।  
विनाऽपरोक्षानुभवं ब्रह्मशब्देन मुच्यते ॥ ६४ ॥

## योगवासिष्ठः

न शास्त्राज्जगद्गुरुर्वाक्याज्ज दानाज्ञेश्वरार्चनात् ।

एष सर्वपदातीतो बोधात्संप्राप्यते परः ॥ ६. उ० १९७. १८

ज्ञानेतरा गतिः . . . . . ।

नास्ति संसारतरणे पाशबन्धस्य चेतसः ॥ ५. ६७. २

न विचारादृते तत्त्वं ज्ञायते साधु किंचन ॥ २. १४. ५२

न देवं न च कर्माणि न धनानि न बान्धवाः ।

शरणं भवभीतानां स्वप्रयत्नादृते नृणाम् ॥ ५. १३. ८

न तीर्थेन न दानेन न स्नानेन न विद्यया ।

न ध्यानेन न योगेन न तपोभिर्न चाध्वरैः ॥ ६. उ० १७४. २४

विचाराज्ज्ञायते तत्त्वं तत्त्वाद्विश्रान्तिरात्मनः ॥ २. १४. ५३

स्वशक्तिसंप्रवृत्त्या तल्लभ्यते नान्यतः क्वचित् ॥ ५. ४३. १३

न हरेर्न गुरोर्नाथार्त्तिकचिदासाद्यते महत् ॥ ५. ४३. १७

आत्माऽऽत्मना न चेत्त्रातस्तदुपायोऽस्ति नेतरत् ॥ ६. उ० १६२. १८

नात्मनः प्राप्यते यत्तत्प्राप्यते न जगत्त्रयात् ॥ ५. ४३. १९

न तीर्थेन न दानेन न स्नानेन न विद्यया ।

न ध्यानेन न योगेन न तपोभिर्न चाध्वरैः ॥ ६. उ० १७४. २४

अत्र ज्ञानमनुष्ठानं न त्वन्यदुपयुज्यते ॥ ३. ६. २

न शास्त्राज्जगद्गुरुर्वाक्याज्ज दानाज्ञेश्वरार्चनात् ।

एष सर्वपदातीतो बोधात्संप्राप्यते परः ॥ ६. उ० १९७. १८

स्वयमेव यथा पीते नीरोगत्वं वरौषधे ॥ ३. ८. १५

न शास्त्रैर्नापि गुरुणा दृश्यते परमेश्वरः ।

दृश्यते स्वात्मनैवात्मा स्वया सत्त्वस्थया धिया ॥ ६. पू० ११८. ४



## चिवेकचूडामणिः

अकृत्वा दृश्यविलयमज्ञात्वा तत्त्वमात्मनः ।

ब्रह्मशब्दैः कुतो मुक्तिरुक्तिमात्रफलैर्नृणाम् ॥ ६५ ॥

स्वैरेव यत्नः कर्तव्यः ॥ ६८ ॥

निर्वाणसुखं समृच्छति ॥ ७२ ॥

त्वङ्मांसरुधिरस्त्रायुमेदोमज्जास्थिसंकुलम् ।

पूर्णं मूत्रपुरीषाभ्यां स्थूलं निन्द्यमिदं वपुः ॥ ८९ ॥

वागादि पञ्च श्रवणादि पञ्च प्राणादि पञ्चाभ्रमुखाणि पञ्च ।

बुद्ध्याबविद्याऽपि च कामकर्मणी पुर्यष्टकं सूक्ष्मशरीरमाहुः ॥ ९८ ॥

असदिदमनात्मकं त्वं विद्धि मरुमरीचिकाकल्पम् ॥ १२५ ॥

अथ ते संप्रवक्ष्यामि स्वरूपं परमात्मनः ॥ १२६ ॥

यस्य संनिधिमात्रेण देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः ।

विषयेषु स्वकीयेषु वर्तन्ते प्रेरिता इव ॥ १३१ ॥

बीजं संसृतिभूमिजस्य ॥ १४७ ॥

न ह्यस्यविद्या मनसोऽतिरिक्ता मनो ह्यविद्या भवबन्धहेतुः ।

तस्मिन्विनष्टे सकलं विनष्टं विजृम्भितेऽस्मिन्सकलं विजृम्भते ॥ १७१ ॥

## योगवासिष्ठः

“अयं स देव” इत्येव संपरिज्ञानमात्रतः ।

जन्तोर्न जायते दुःखं जीवन्मुक्तत्वमेति च ॥ ३. ६. ६

तज्ज्ञानं ब्रह्मणो रूपं भवेन्नान्येन कर्मणा ।

दृश्यात्यन्ताभावतस्तु ऋते नान्या शुभा गतिः ॥ ३. ७. २८

स्वपौरुषप्रयत्नेन . . . . स देवो ज्ञायते ॥ ३. ६. ९

मुक्तिरेषोच्यते . . . . निर्वाणमेतत्कथितम् ॥ ३. ९. २५

रक्तमांसमयस्यास्य सबाष्पाभ्यन्तरं मुने ।

नाशैकधर्मिणि ब्रूहि कैव कायस्य रम्यता ॥ १. १८. ३८

मनो बुद्धिरहंकारस्तथा तन्मात्रपञ्चकम् ।

इति पुर्यष्टकं प्रोक्तं देहोऽसावातिवाहिकः ॥ ६. ५० ५१. ५०

मृगतृष्णाग्निववासत्यं सत्यवत्प्रत्ययप्रदम् ॥ ४. १. ७

रूपं कथय मे ब्रह्मन्यथावत्परमात्मनः ॥ ३. ७. १८

मणिसंनिधिमात्रेण यथाऽयः स्पन्दते जडम् ।

तत्सत्तया तथैवायं देहश्चेतत्यचिद्वपुः ॥ ६. ५० ९. ३२

संमृतिव्रततेर्बीजम् ॥ ५. ९. ८

चित्तमेव सकलभूताडम्बरकारिणीमविद्यां विद्धि । सा विचित्रकेन्द्रजालव-

शादिदमुत्पादयति ॥ ३. ११६. ८

चित्तनाशे न संसारः ॥ ५. ५०. १४

मनोविजृम्भणमिदं संसार इति संमतम् ॥ ४. ४७. ४८

चित्तमेव जगत्कर्तृ ॥ ६. ३० १३९. १

## विवेकचूडामणिः

स्वप्नेऽर्थशून्ये सृजति स्वशक्त्या भोक्तादि विश्वं मन एव सर्वम् ।  
तथैव जाग्रत्यपि नो विशेषस्तत्सर्वमेतन्मनसो विजृम्भणम् ॥ १७२ ॥

अतो मनःकल्पित एव पुंसः संसार एतस्य न वस्तुतोऽस्ति ॥ १७३ ॥

मनसा कल्प्यते बन्धो मोक्षस्तेनैव कल्प्यते ॥ १७४ ॥

मनः प्रसूते विषयानशेषान् ॥ १७५ ॥

अतः प्राहुर्मनोऽविद्यां पण्डितास्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ १८२ ॥

द्रष्टा हि दृश्यात्मतया न दृष्टः ॥ १८५ ॥

तन्मनःशोधनं कार्यं प्रयत्नेन मुमुक्षुणा ।

विशुद्धे सति चैतस्मिन्मुक्तिः करफलायते ॥ १८३ ॥

भ्रान्त्या प्राप्तो जीवभावो न सत्यः ॥ १९८ ॥



## योगवासिष्ठः

यथा स्वप्नस्तथा जाग्रदिदं नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ३. ५७. ५०

मनोविजृम्भणमिदं संसारः ॥ ४. ४७. ४८

मिथ्यादृष्टय एवेमाः सृष्टयो मोहदृष्टयः ।

मायामात्रदृशो भ्रान्तिः शून्याः स्वप्नानुभूतयः ॥ ३. ६२. ५४

समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदम् ॥ ६. ३० २१०. ११

मनोमनननिर्माणमात्रमेतज्जगत्त्रयम् ॥ ४. ११. २३

मिथ्याकाल्पनिकीवेयं मूर्खाणां बन्धकल्पना ।

मिथ्यैवाभ्युदिता तेषामितरा मोक्षकल्पना ॥ ३. १००. ३९

चित्तमेव जगत्कर्तृ ॥ ६. ३० १३९. १

चित्तमेव सकलाडम्बरकारिणीमविद्यां विद्धि ॥ ३. ११६. ८

द्रष्टा न याति दृश्यत्वम् ॥ ६. ३० १९०. २५

मनो हि विलक्षणानां क्रियाणां कर्तृ भोक्तृ च । तदेव निर्धृष्य संशोध्य

चित्तरत्नमिह हिमकणमिवातपेन विलीनतां विवेकेन नीत्वा परं श्रेयः

प्राप्स्यसि ॥ ३. ११६. ८

चित्ततामे शोधिते हि परमार्थसुवर्णता ॥ ३. ९१. ४९

चित्तं वृत्तिविहीनं ते यदा यातमचित्तात् ॥

तदा मोक्षमयीमन्तः सत्तामाप्नोषि तां तताम् ॥ ५. २१. २६

तस्मिञ्जिते जितं सर्वं सर्वमासादितं भवेत् ॥ ५. २४. १५

आत्मैवानात्मवदिह जीवो जगति राजते ।

द्वीन्दुत्वमिव दुर्दृष्टेः सच्चासच्च समुत्थितम् ॥ ३. १००. ३५

## विवेकचूडामणिः

यावद् भ्रान्तिस्तावदेवास्य सत्ता मिथ्याज्ञानोज्जृम्भितस्य प्रमादात् ।  
रज्ज्वां सर्पो भ्रान्तिकालीन एव भ्रान्तेर्नाशे नैव सर्पोऽपि तद्वत् ॥ १९९ ॥

विनिवृत्तिर्भवेत्तस्य सम्यग्ज्ञानेन नान्यथा ।  
ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वविज्ञानं सम्यग्ज्ञानं श्रुतेर्मेतम् ॥ २०४ ॥

सत्यं यदि स्याज्जगदेतदात्मना न तत्त्वहानिः . . . ॥ २३४ ॥

अतः पृथङ् नास्ति जगत्परात्मनः ॥ २३७ ॥

ज्ञातृज्ञेयज्ञानशून्यमनन्तं निर्विकल्पकम् ।  
केवलाखण्डचिन्मात्रं परं तत्त्वं विदुर्बुधाः ॥ २४१ ॥

निद्राकल्पितदेशकालविषयज्ञानादि सर्वं यथा  
मिथ्या तद्वदिहापि जाग्रति जगत्स्वाज्ञानकार्यत्वतः ॥ २५४ ॥

स्वप्ने नष्टं स्वप्नविश्वं विचित्रं स्वस्माद्विज्ञं किं नु दृष्टं प्रबोधे ॥ २५५ ॥

मुक्तिं प्राहुस्तदिह मुनयो वासनातानवं यत् ॥ २६८ ॥

संसारकारागृहमोक्षमिच्छोरयोमयं पादनिबद्धशृङ्खलम् ।  
बदन्ति तज्ज्ञाः पटु वासनात्रयं योऽस्माद्विमुक्तः स उपैति मुक्तिम् ॥ २७३ ॥

## योगवासिष्ठः

यस्त्वबुद्धमतिर्मूढो रूढो न वितते पदे ।

वज्रसारमिदं तस्य जगदस्यसदेव सत् ॥ ३. ४२. १

दृष्टे सर्वगते बोधे स्वयमेव विलीयते ।

रज्ज्वां सर्पभ्रमो नष्टः सत्यबोधवशाद्यथा ॥ ३. २१. ५९

आत्राण्णकीटसंविक्तेः सम्यक्संवेदनात्क्षयः ॥ ३. ६७. ६८

इमा घटपटाकाराः पदार्थशतपङ्क्तयः ।

आत्मैव नान्यदस्तीति सम्यग्ज्ञानं विदुर्बुधाः ॥ ५. ७९. ३

सच्चैत्र शान्त्यति कदाचन दृश्यदुःखम् ॥ ३. ३. ४०

न जगत्पृथग्गीश्वरात् ॥ ३. ६१. ४

द्रष्टृदर्शनदृश्यादिवर्जितं तद्विदं परम् ॥ ३. १२१. ५३

सर्वमेकमनाद्यन्तमविभागमखण्डितम् ॥ ३. ८४. २६

मायेयं स्वपनभ्रान्तिर्मिथ्यारचितचक्रिका ॥ ४. ४. ४१

बोध एव कचत्यर्थरूपेण स च स्वादणुः ।

दृष्टान्तोऽत्रानुभूतोऽन्तः स्वप्नसंकल्पपर्वतः ॥ ६. ५४. ११

नास्त्येव सत्यनुभवे तथा नास्त्येव ब्रह्मणि ।

कल्पनाव्यतिरिक्तात्मतत्त्वभावादनामयात् ॥ ३. २१. ६६

वासनातानवं राम मोक्ष इत्युच्यते बुधैः ।

पदार्थवासनादाढ्यं बन्ध इत्यभिधीयते ॥ २. २. ५

वासनातन्तुबद्धा ये आशापाशवशीकृताः ।

वश्यतां यान्ति ते लोके रज्जुबद्धाः स्वगा इव ॥ ४. २७. १८

कोशकारवदात्मानं वासनातनुतन्तुभिः ।

येष्टयच्चैव चेतोऽन्तर्बाल्त्वान्नावबुध्यते ॥ ६. ५०. १०. ८



## विवेकचूडामणिः

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नित्यात्मनिष्ठया तेषां नाशे भाति स्वयं स्फुटम् ॥ २७६ ॥

यथा यथा प्रत्यगवस्थितं मनस्तथा तथा मुञ्चति बाह्यवासनाः ।

निःशेषमोक्षे सति वासनानामात्मानुभूतिः प्रतिबन्धशून्या ॥ २७७ ॥

स्वात्मन्येव सदा स्थित्या मनो नश्यति योगिनः ।

वासनानां क्षयश्चातः . . . . . ॥ २७८ ॥

तमो द्वाभ्यां रजः सत्त्वात्सत्त्वं गुद्धेन नश्यति ॥ २७९ ॥

विलाप्यास्त्रण्डभावेन तूष्णीं भव सदा मुने ॥ २८९ ॥

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चन्द्रवद्विमलः पूर्णः सदानन्दः स्वयंप्रभः ॥ ३०१ ॥

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न हृष्यन्ति न कुप्यन्ति दुर्जयास्ते महाधियः ॥ ४. २७. १८

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हृदये स्थितिमायाति श्रीरिवाम्भोजकोटरे ॥ ५. २४. ४३

यतो यतो विरज्यते ततस्ततो विमुच्यते ॥ ३. ६१. ३५

संयोजिते परे चित्तं शुद्धं निर्वासनं भवेत् ।

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यो मुमुक्षोरविद्यांशः केवलो नाम सात्त्विकः ।

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जगदाद्यखिलं दृश्यं तथा नास्ति कदाचन ॥ ३. ११. ४

अहंभावोऽभिमन्ताऽऽत्मा मूलमाद्यमुदाहृतम् ॥ ६. उ० १५. २

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संकल्पं वर्जयेत्तस्मात्सर्वानर्थस्य कारणम् ॥ ३२८ ॥

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चिज्ज्योत्स्ना यावदेवान्तरहंकारघनावृता ।

विकासयति नो तावत्परमार्थकुमुद्वतीम् ॥ ४. ३३. २८

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नूनं संप्रौढतामेति स्वालोको भास्करः परः ॥ ५. १३. १७

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एकध्याने परे रूढे निर्विकल्पसमाधिनि ॥ ३. २१. ७६

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तदक्षयमुपुत्ताभं तन्मन्येतामलं पदम् ॥ ३. १. ३६

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संसारदुःखमखिलं मूलादपि महामते ॥ ४. ५४. १०.

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सति सक्तो नरो याति सद्भावं श्लोकनिष्ठया ।

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क्रियान्तरासक्तिमपास्य कीटको ध्यायन् यथाऽलिं ह्यलिभावमृच्छति ।

तथैव योगी परमात्मतत्त्वं ध्यात्वा समायाति तदेकनिष्ठया ॥ ३६० ॥

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तदा समाधिः स विकल्पवर्जितः स्वतोऽद्वयानन्दरसानुभावकः ॥ ३६३ ॥

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तरङ्गफेनभ्रमबुद्बुदादि सर्वं स्वरूपेण जलं यथा तथा ।

चिदेव देहाद्यहमन्तमेतत्सर्वं चिदेवैकरसं विशुद्धम् ॥ ३९१ ॥

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तं तथैवानुभवति भवेच्चेद् दृढनिश्चयः ॥ ६. ३० २१०. ७  
यच्चित्तं तन्मयो जन्तुर्भवति ॥ ३. ५६. २८  
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तद्रूपमेव पुरुषो भवतीह नान्यत् ॥ ३. ८८. २१

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एकध्याने परे रूढे निर्विकल्पसमाधिनि ॥ ३. २१. ७६  
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न दृश्यते कश्चिदयं विकल्पः प्रजल्पमात्रः परिशिष्यते यतः ॥ ३९९ ॥

चित्तमूलो विकल्पोऽयं चित्ताभावे न कश्चन ।  
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सर्वत्र समदर्शित्वं जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥ ४३४ ॥

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उदासीनवदासीनः प्रकृतः कमकर्मसु ॥ ५. ७७. ११

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साधुभिः पूज्यमानेऽस्मिन्पीड्यमानेऽपि दुर्जनैः ।  
समभावो भवेद्यस्य स जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणः ॥ ४४१ ॥

सदात्मैकत्वविज्ञानान्मन्दीभवति वासना ॥ ४४४ ॥

स्वानुभूत्या स्वयं ज्ञात्वा स्वमात्मानमखण्डितम् ॥ ४७८ ॥

क गतं केन वा नीतं कुत्र लीनमिदं जगत् ॥ ४८४ ॥

किं हेयं किमुपादेयम् ॥ ४८५ ॥

बाह्याभ्यन्तरगूढं पूर्णं ब्रह्माद्वितीयमेवाहम् ॥ ४९३ ॥

मय्यखण्डसुखान्भोधौ बहुधा विश्ववीचयः ।  
उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते मायामारुतविभ्रमात् ॥ ४९७ ॥

शैलस्यो वेषसद्भावाभावयोश्च यथा पुमान् ॥ ५५६ ॥

तथैव सकलं दृश्यं ब्रह्मणि प्रविलीयते ॥ ५६५ ॥

अस्तीति प्रत्ययो यश्च यश्च नास्तीति वस्तुनि ।  
बुद्धेरेव गुणावेतौ न तु नित्यस्य वस्तुनः ॥ ५७३ ॥

अतस्तौ मायया क्लृप्तौ बन्धमोक्षौ न चात्मनि ॥ ५७४ ॥



## योगवासिष्ठः

रागद्वेषभयादीनामनुरूपं चरन्नपि ।

योऽन्तर्व्योमवदच्छस्थः स जीवन्मुक्त उच्यते ॥ ३. ९. ८

जीवन्मुक्तशरीरेषु वासना व्यवहारिणी ॥ ६. पू० २. ४३

भूयः फलति नो मोहं दग्धवीजमिवाङ्कुरम् ॥ ६. पू० २. ४७

अनुभूतिं विना रूपं नात्मनश्चानुभूयते ॥ ५. ६४. ५३

परमार्थैकतामेत्य न जाने क मनो गतम् ॥ ६. उ० ४६. ८

न जाने क गतोऽङ्गीय दुरहंकृतिपक्षिणी ॥ ५. ३५. ८१

संसारे किमुपादेयम् ॥ ४. ४५. ४२

किं स्यात्तिभुवने हेयम् ॥ ४. ४५. ४३

अन्तः पूर्णो बहिः पूर्णः पूर्णकुम्भ इवार्णवे ॥ ६. पू० १२६. ६९

अन्तः शून्यो बहिः शून्यः शून्यकुम्भ इवाम्बरे ॥ ६. पू० १२६. ६८

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिमणा इव ॥ ४. २२. ३१

यन्नाम किञ्चित्तैलोक्यं स एवावयवो मम ।

तरङ्गोऽब्जाविवेत्यन्तर्यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ४. २२. ३३

यथा गच्छति शैल्यो रूपाण्यलं तथैव हि ॥ ३. ९६. ४३

संविदोऽन्तर्मिलन्त्येते स्पन्दनान्यनिले यथा ॥ ३. ५७. ४४

न च नास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युज्यते चिद्वपुर्यद्रा ।

न चैवास्तीति तद्वक्तुं युक्तं शान्तमलं तदा ॥ ६. उ० ५३. ९

मिथ्याकाल्पनिकीवेयं मूर्खाणां बन्धकल्पना ।

मिथ्यैवाभ्युदिता तेषामितरा मोक्षकल्पना ॥ ३. १००. ३९

### स्वात्मनिरूपणम्

व्यवहारदशैवेयं विद्याऽविद्येति वेदपरिभाषा ।

नास्त्येव तत्त्वदृष्ट्या तत्त्वं ब्रह्मैव नान्यदस्त्यस्मात् ॥ ९७ ॥

### आत्मबोधः

सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा न हि सर्वत्र भासते ।

बुद्धावेवावभासेत स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् ॥ १७ ॥

### शतश्लोकी

अतो दृष्टिसुष्टं किलेदम् ॥ ८१ ॥

कश्चित्कीटः कथंचित्पटुमतिरभितः कण्टकानां कुटीरं

कुर्वस्तेनैव साकं व्यवहृतिविधये चेष्टते यावदायुः ।

तद्वज्जीवोऽपि नानाचरितसमुदितैः कर्मभिः स्थूलदेहं

निर्मायात्रैव तिष्ठन्ननुदिनममुना साकमभ्येति भूयः ॥ ६ ॥

यः कश्चित्सौर्यहेतोर्बिजगति यतते नैव दुःखस्य हेतोः ॥ १५ ॥

कल्पनामूलमेतत् ॥ ३६ ॥

न चैकं तदन्यद्वितीयं कुतः स्यान्न वा केवलत्वं न चाकेवलत्वम् ।

न शून्यं न चाशून्यमद्वैतकत्वात्कथं सर्ववेदान्तसिद्धं ब्रवीमि ॥ १० ॥

## योगवासिष्ठः

अविद्येयमयं जीव इत्यादिकलनाक्रमः ।

अप्रबुद्धप्रबोधाय कल्पितो वाम्बिदां वरैः ॥ ६. पू० ४९. १७

शास्त्रसंव्यवहारार्थं न राम परमार्थतः ।

नाविद्याऽस्ति न विद्याऽस्ति कृतं कल्पनयाऽनया ॥ ६. पू० ९. १७

सर्वत्र स्थितमाकाशमादर्शं प्रतिबिम्बति ।

यथा तथाऽऽत्मा सर्वत्र स्थितश्चेतसि दृश्यते ॥ ५. ७१. ३९

दृष्टिस्मृष्ट्या पुनः पुनः ॥ ३. ११४. ५६

सृष्टिं पश्यति जीवोऽन्तः ॥ ६. उ० २२. २७

अन्तःकरणतत्त्वस्य भागा बहिरिव स्थिताः ॥ ५. ५९. ३५

यादृगर्थं जगद्रूपं तत्रैवोदेति तत्क्षणात् ॥ ३. ४४. १९

न किञ्चिदपि जानाति निजसंवेदनादृते ॥ ३. ५५. ६१

मनसेदं शरीरं हि वासनार्थं प्रकल्पितम् ।

कृमिकोशप्रकारेण स्वात्मकोश इव स्वयम् ॥ ४. ४५. ७

प्राक्प्रवाहचिराभ्यस्तो वासनातिशयेन यः ।

तथैव दृश्यते देहस्तथाऽऽकृत्युदयेन सः ॥ ६. पू० २८. ३४

आनन्दायैव भूतानि यतन्ते यानि कानिचित् ॥ ६. पू० १०८. २०

समस्तं कल्याणमात्रमिदम् । ६. उ० २१०. ११

सति द्वित्वे किलैकं स्यात्सत्येकत्वे द्विरूपता ।

कले द्वे अपि चिद्रूपे चिद्रूपत्वात्तदप्यसत् ॥ ६. पू० ३३. ४



### दक्षिणामूर्तिस्तोत्रम्

विश्वं दर्पणदृश्यमाननगरीतुल्यं निजान्तर्गतं  
पश्यन्नात्मनि मायया बहिरिवोद्भूतं यथा निद्रया ॥ १ ॥

### अपरोक्षानुभूतिः

नोत्पद्यते विना ज्ञानं विचारेणान्यसाधनैः ।  
यथा पदार्थभानं हि प्रकाशेन विना क्वचित् ॥ ११ ॥  
कोऽहं कथमिदं जातं को वा कर्ताऽस्य विद्यते ।  
उपादानं किमस्तीह स विचारोऽयमीदृशः ॥ १२ ॥  
यथा . . . कनके कुण्डलाभिधा ॥ ६० ॥  
यथा नीरं मरुस्थले ॥ ६१ ॥

यथैव शून्ये वेतालः ॥ ६२ ॥  
गन्धर्वाणां पुरं यथा ॥ ६२ ॥  
यथाऽऽकाशे द्विचन्द्रत्वम् ॥ ६२ ॥  
सर्पत्वेन यथा रज्जुः ॥ ७० ॥  
कनकं कुण्डलत्वेन तरङ्गत्वेन वै जलम् ॥ ७२ ॥

## योगवासिष्ठः

एकाभावादभावोऽत्र एकत्वद्वित्वयोर्द्वयोः ।

एकं विना न द्वितीयं न द्वितीयं विनैकता ॥ ६. पू० ३३. ५

अशून्यापेक्षया शून्यशब्दार्थपरिकल्पना ।

अशून्यत्वात्संभवतः शून्यताशून्यते कुतः ॥ ३. १०. १४

..... बहिरिव स्थितम् ।

सृष्टिं पश्यति जीवोऽन्तः सरसीमिव पर्वतः ॥ ६. उ० २२. २७

बाह्यमाभ्यन्तरं भाति स्वप्नार्थोऽत्र निदर्शनम् ॥ ३. ४४. २०

स्वयमेव विचारेण विचार्यात्मानमात्मना ।

यावन्नाधिगतं ज्ञेयं न तावदधिगम्यते ॥ ५. ५. ६

कोऽहं कथमिदं किं वा कथं मरणजन्मनी ।

विचारयान्तरेवं त्वं महत्तामलमेप्यसि ॥ ५. ५८. ३२

हेम्नीव कटकादित्वम् ॥ ३. ७. २९

कुतो मरौ जलसरित् ॥ ३. ७. ४२

यथा नास्ति मरौ जलम् ॥ ३. ७. ४३

यथा नास्ति नभोयक्षः ॥ ३. ७. ४४

यथा संकल्पनगरं यथा गन्धर्वपत्तनम् ॥ ३. ३. ३०

यथा द्वित्वं शशाङ्कादौ पश्यत्यक्षि मलाविलम् ॥ ३. ६६. ७

यथा रज्ज्वामहिभ्रान्तिः ॥ २. १७. ९

कटकत्वं यथा हेम्नि तरङ्गत्वं यथाऽम्भसि ॥ ३. २१. ६५

## अपरोक्षानुभूतिः

जलत्वेन मरीचिका ॥ ७३ ॥

यथा वृक्षविपर्यासो जलाद्भवति कस्यचित् ॥ ७९ ॥

भावितं तीव्रवेगेण वस्तु यन्निश्चयात्मना ।

पुमांस्तद्वि भवेच्छीघ्रं ज्ञेयं भ्रमरकीटवत् ॥ १४० ॥



## योगवासिष्ठः

मृगतृष्णाम्बिव्वासत्यम् ॥ ४. १. ७

तीरद्रुमलतोन्मुक्तपुष्पालीव तरङ्गिणी ॥ ३. ६२. ४

भावितं तीव्रवेगेण यदेवाशु तदेव हि ॥ ६. ५० २८. ३७

यथैव भावयत्यात्मा तथैव भवति स्वयम् ॥ ४. ११. २९

. . . . . यद्भाषयति यादृशम् ।

तत्तथाऽऽशु भवत्येव . . . . ॥ ४. १७. ४



## APPENDIX I (b)

SUREŚVARĀCĀRYA'S *Manasollāsa* AND *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*,  
COMPARED



## मानसोल्लासः

अन्तरस्मिन्निमे लोका अन्तर्विश्वमिदं जगत् ।  
बहिर्वन्माययाऽऽभाति दर्पणे स्वशरीरवत् ॥ १. ८

स्वप्ने स्वान्तर्गतं विश्वं यथा पृथगिवेक्ष्यते ।  
तथैव जाग्रत्कालेऽपि प्रपञ्चोऽयं विविच्यताम् ॥ १. ९  
स्वप्ने प्रकाशो भावानां स्वप्रकाशान्न हीतरः ।  
जाग्रत्पि तथैवेति निश्चिन्वन्ति विपश्चितः ॥ १. ११  
निद्रया दर्शितानर्थांश्च पश्यति यथोत्थितः ।  
सम्यग्ज्ञानोदयादूर्ध्वं तथा विश्वं न पश्यति ॥ १. १२  
तथैव जाग्रत्कालेऽपि मनोराज्यं करोत्यसौ ॥ १. १८  
ब्रह्मादिस्तम्बपर्यन्ता स्वप्नकल्पैव कल्पना ॥ १. २८  
वेदान्तिनः ॥ २. १९

माया प्रधानमव्यक्तमविद्याऽज्ञानमक्षरम् ।  
अव्याकृतं च प्रकृतिस्तम इत्यभिधीयते ॥ २. ३१  
ईश्वरोऽनन्तशक्तित्वात्स्वतन्त्रोऽन्यानपेक्षकः ।  
स्वेच्छामात्रेण सकलं सृजत्यवति हन्ति च ॥ २. ४८  
प्रागूर्ध्वं चासतां सत्त्वं वर्तमानेऽपि न स्वतः ॥ ४. ३  
सम्यक्प्रकाशे सद्वृत्तेऽप्येकस्मिन्परमेश्वरे ।  
कार्यकारणसंबन्धाद्यनेकविधकल्पना ॥ ८. ५  
राहोः शिरः सुषिः स्वस्य ममात्मा प्रतिमावपुः ।  
इत्यादिकल्पनातुल्या न पृथक्त्वस्तुगोचरा ॥ ८. ६

## योगवासिष्ठः

परमादर्शं चिद्वचोमि ॥ ३. ६४. ७

बहिर्न किञ्चिदप्यस्ति स्वाद्रश्म्युर्वीदिगादिकम् ।

एतस्त्वचित्त एवास्ति पत्रपुञ्जमिवाङ्कुरे ॥ ५. ४८. ४९.

बाह्यं न विद्यते किञ्चिद्बोधः स्फुरति बाह्यवत् ॥ ६. ३० ५१. ८

पदार्थजातं शैलादि यथा स्वप्ने पुरादि च ।

चिदेवैकं परं व्योम तथा जगत्पदार्थभूः ॥ ६. ३० ५६. ३

स्वप्ने चिन्मात्रमेवाद्यं स्वयं भाति जगत्तया ।

यथा तथैव सर्गादौ नात्रान्यदुपपद्यते ॥ ६. ५० १७६. ५

येन बोधात्मना बुद्धं स ज्ञ इत्यभिधीयते ।

अद्वैतस्योपशान्तस्य तस्य विश्वं न विद्यते ॥ ६. ३० ४९. १८

मनोराज्यमिवालोम ॥ ४. ४७. ४१

समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदम् ॥ ६. ३० २१०. ११

वेदान्तवादिनः ॥ ३. ५. ६

अविद्या संसृतिर्बन्धो माया मोहो महत्तमः ।

कल्पितानीति नामानि यस्याः सकलवेदिभिः ॥ ३. १. २०

शक्तीनामन्तो नास्ति शिवात्मनः ॥ ६. ५० ३७. १६

स्वशक्तिः . . . लीलैव ॥ ४. ४४. १४

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ॥ ४. ४५. ४५

दुर्बुद्धिभिः कारणकार्यभावं संकल्पितं दूरतरे व्युदस्य ॥ ४. १. ३६

कार्यकारणकालादिकल्पनाकुलचेतसाम् ॥ ६. ३० १०७. १३

## मानसोल्लासः

भेदप्रतीतिर्मिथ्यैव माययाऽऽत्मनि कल्पिता ॥ ८. ९

युक्तिहीनप्रकाशस्य संज्ञा मायेति कथ्यते ॥ ८. १३

नासती दृश्यमाना सा बाध्यमाना न वा सती ॥ ८. १२ ॥

तथैव मायया जीवो भ्रामितो वासनावशात् ।

नानाकारमिदं विश्वं भ्रममाणं च पश्यति ॥ ८. २४

योगाभ्यासवशाद्येन मनो निर्विषयं कृतम् ।

निवृत्तः स पुमान्सद्यो जीवन्मुक्तो भविष्यति ॥ ८. २६

ध्यानादस्पन्दनं बुद्धेः समाधिरभिधीयते ।

अमनस्कसमाधिस्तु सर्वचिन्ताविवर्जितम् ॥ ९. ३०

चित्ते निश्चलतां याते प्राणो भवति निश्चलः ।

चित्तस्य निश्चलत्वाय योगं सध्यानमभ्यसेत् ॥ ९. ३१



## योगवासिष्ठः

मायेयं स्वप्नवद् भ्रान्तिर्मिथ्यारचितचक्रिका ॥ ४. ४७. ४१

कारणाभावतः कार्यमभूत्वा भवतीति यत् ।

मिथ्याज्ञानादृते तस्य न रूपमुपपद्यते ॥ ६. ५०. ९५. ९.

नातः सत्यमिदं दृश्यं न चासत्यं कदाचन ॥ ३. ४४. ३

वासनातन्तुबद्धा य आशापाशवशीकृताः ।

वश्यतां यान्ति ते लोके रज्जुबद्धाः स्वगा इव ॥ ४. २७. २८

मलं संवेद्यमुत्सृज्य मनो निर्गलयन्परम् ।

आशापाशमलं छित्त्वा स्वसंवित्तिपरो भव ॥ ५. ५०. ३४

एकध्याने परे रूढे निर्विकल्पसमाधिनि ।

अत्यन्ताभावसंपत्तौ द्रष्टृदृश्यदृशां मनः ॥ ३. २१. ७६

संसारसंभवश्चायं निर्मूलत्वमुपेक्ष्यति ॥ ३. २१. ७८

एकतत्त्वधनाभ्यासः प्राणानां विलयस्तथा ।

मनोविनिग्रहश्चेति योगशब्दार्थसंग्रहः ॥ ६. ५०. ६९. २७

एकस्मिन्नेव संसिद्धे संसिध्यन्ति परस्परम् ॥ ६. ५०. ६९. ४०

त्रिष्वेतेषु प्रयोगेषु मनःप्रशमनं वरम् ।

साध्यं विद्धि तदेवागु यथा भवति तच्छिवम् ॥ ६. ५०. ६९. २९

एकार्थाभ्यासेन प्राणरोधश्चेतःपरिक्षयः ॥ ५. ९१. ४०



## APPENDIX II

### COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GAŪḌA-PĀDA'S *Māṇḍūkya-kārika* AND *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*



## माण्डूक्यकारिका

कल्पिता एव ते सर्वे ॥ २. १४

अव्यक्ता एव येऽन्तस्तु स्फुटा एव च ये बहिः ।

कल्पिता एव ते सर्वे विशेषस्त्विन्द्रियान्तरे ॥ २. १५

मनोदृश्यमिदं द्वैतं यत्किञ्चित्सचराचरम् ॥ ३. ३१

ग्रहणग्राहकाभासं विज्ञानस्पन्दितं तथा ॥ ४. ४७

ऋजुवक्रादिकाभासमलातस्पन्दितं यथा ।

ग्रहणग्राहकाभासं विज्ञानस्पन्दितं तथा ॥ ४. ४७

स्वप्नमाये यथा दृष्टे गन्धर्वनगरं यथा ।

तथा विश्वमिदं दृष्टं वेदान्तेषु विचक्षणैः ॥ २. ३१

स्वप्नजागरितस्थाने श्लोकमाहुर्मनीषिणः ।

भेदानां हि समत्वेन प्रसिद्धेनैव हेतुना ॥ २. ५

कल्पयत्यात्मनाऽऽत्मानमात्मा देवः स्वमायया ॥ २. १२

जीवं कल्पयते पूर्वं ततो भावान्पृथग्विधान् ॥ २. १६

मायैषा तस्य देवस्य यया संमोहितः स्वयम् ॥ २. १९

यं भावं दर्शयेद्यस्य तं भावं स तु पश्यति ।

तं चावति स भूत्वाऽसौ तद्ग्रहः समुपैति तम् ॥ २. २९

## योगवासिष्ठः

समस्तं कल्पनामात्रमिदम् ॥ ६. ३०. २१०. ११

संकल्पकचित्तं सर्वमेवं स्वप्नवदात्मनः ॥ ३. १०१. ३५

मनोमनननिर्माणमात्रमेतज्जगत्त्रयम् ॥ ४. ११. २३

संकल्पाद्विविधार्थत्वं चित्स्पन्दो याति सृष्टिषु ॥ ३. ६७. १०

सस्पन्दे समुदेतीव निःस्पन्दान्तर्गतेव च ।

इयं यस्मिञ्जगत्क्षमीरलात इव चक्रता ॥ ३. ९. ५८

अलातवत् ॥ ६. ३०. ६०. ६१

मायामात्रदृशो भ्रान्तिः शून्याः स्वप्नानुभूतयः ॥ ३. ५१. ५४

यथा गन्धर्वनगरं तथा संसृतिविभ्रमः ॥ ६. ५०. ३३. ४५

जाग्रत्स्वप्नदशामेदो न स्थिरास्थिरते विना ।

समः सदैव सर्वत्र समस्तोऽनुभवोऽनयोः ॥ ४. १९. ११

दिकालाद्यनवच्छिन्नमात्मतत्त्वं स्वशक्तिः ।

लीलया तत्तदादत्ते दिक्कालकलितं वपुः ॥ ४. ४४. ४

चिद्रूपस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य स्वभाववशतः स्वयम् ।

मनावसंवेदनमिव यत्तज्जीव इति स्मृतम् ॥ ३. ६४. ११

अनन्तस्यात्मतत्त्वस्य सर्वशक्तेर्महात्मनः ।

संकल्पशक्तिरचितं यद्रूपं तन्मनो विदुः ॥ ३. ९६. ३

मनस्तामिव यातेन ब्रह्मणा तन्यते जगत् ॥ ३. ९. २९

तस्या दृश्यात्मतत्त्वस्य विस्मृत्यैव गतं स्थितिम् ॥ ६. ५०. ११४. ३

प्रतिभासमुपायाति यद्यदस्य हि चेतसः ।

तत्तत्प्रकटतामेति स्थैर्यं सफलतामपि ॥ ३. ९१. १७

## माण्डूक्यकारिका

आदावन्ते च यत्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ॥ २. ६

न कश्चिज्जायते जीवः संभवोऽस्य न विद्यते ।

एतत्तदुत्तमं सत्यं यत्र किञ्चिन्न जायते ॥ ३. ४८

न भवत्यमृतं मर्त्यं न मर्त्यममृतं तथा ।

प्रकृतेरन्यथाभावो न कथंचिद्विध्यति ॥ ४. ७

सांसिद्धिकी स्वाभाविकी सहजा अकृता च या ।

प्रकृतिः सेति विज्ञेया स्वभावं न जहाति या ॥ ४. ९

बीजाङ्कुराख्यो दृष्टान्तः सदा साध्यसमो हि सः ।

न हि साध्यसमो हेतुः सिद्धौ साध्यस्य युज्यते ॥ ४. २०

सुखमात्रियते नित्यं दुःखं विव्रियते सदा ।

यस्य कस्य च धर्मस्य ग्रहेण भगवानसौ ॥ ४. ८२

निश्चितायां यथा रज्ज्वां विकल्पो विनिवर्तते ।

रज्जुरेवेति चाद्वैतं तद्वदात्मविनिश्चयः ॥ २. १८

मनसो ह्यमनीभावे द्वैतं नैवोपलभ्यते ॥ ३. ३१

मनसो निप्रहायत्तमभयं सर्वयोगिणाम् ।

दुःखक्षयः प्रबोधश्चाप्यक्षया शान्तिरेव च ॥ ३. ४०



## योगवासिष्ठः

आदावन्ते च यन्नास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ॥ ४. ४५. ४५

बुद्धानामस्मदादीनां न किञ्चिन्नाम जायते ॥ ६. ३० १४६. १८

जगन्नाम्ना न चोत्पन्नं न चास्ति न च दृश्यते ॥ ३. ७. ४०

न चाविकारमजरं सविकारं क्षयादृते ॥ ६. ३० १९५. १४

नान्यकिञ्चित्संभवति तदुत्थं यत्तदेव तत् ॥ ४. ४०. ३४

यादृगाद्यन्तयोर्वस्तु तादृगेव तदुच्यते ॥ ६. ५० ४९. ७

आत्मा त्वाद्यन्तमध्येषु समः सर्वत्र सर्वदा ।

स्वमप्यन्यत्वमायाति नात्मतत्त्वं कदाचन ॥ ६. ५० ४९. ८

इदं बीजेऽङ्कुर इव दृश्यमस्ति महाशये ।

ब्रूते य एवमज्ञत्वमेतत्तस्यास्ति शैशवम् ॥ ४. १. २१

इयन्मात्रपरिच्छिन्नो येनात्मा भव्यभावितः ।

स सर्वज्ञोऽपि सर्वत्र परां कृपणतां गतः ॥ ४. २७. २२

यथा रज्ज्वामहिश्रान्तिर्विनश्यत्यवलोकनात् ।

तथैतत्प्रेक्षणाच्छ्रान्तिमेति संसारदुःखिता ॥ २. १७. ९

चित्सत्तैव जगत्सत्ता . . . . . एकाभावाद्द्वयोर्नाशः ॥ ४. १७. १९

संसारस्यास्य दुःखस्य सर्वोपद्रवदायिनः ।

उपाय एक एवास्ति मनसः स्वस्य निग्रहः ॥ ४. ३५. २



### APPENDIX III

BHAVA-BHŪTI'S *Uttara-rāma-carita* AND *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*



## उत्तररामचरितम्

एको रसः करुण एव निमित्तमेवाद्विलः पृथक्पृथगिवाश्रयते विवर्तान् ।  
 आवर्तबुद्बुदतरङ्गमयान्विकारानम्भो यथा सलिलमेव तु तत्समग्रम् ॥ ३. ४७

विद्याकल्पेन मरुता मेघानां भूयसामपि ।  
 ब्रह्मणीव विवर्तानां कापि प्रविलयः कृतः ॥ ६. ६

## योगवासिष्ठः

यः कणो या च कणिका या बीचिर्यस्तरङ्गकः ।  
 यः फेनो या च लहरी तद्यथा वारि वारिणि ॥ ६. पू० ११. ४०  
 तरङ्गकणकलोलैरनन्ताम्बुधुधाविव ॥ ५. ७२. २३  
 तदिदं ब्रह्मणि ब्रह्म ब्रह्मणा च विवर्तते ॥ ३. १००. २८  
 तरङ्गमालयाऽम्भोधिर्यथाऽऽत्मनि विवर्धते ॥ ६. पू० ११. १८  
 तथा पदार्थलक्ष्येत्यमिदं ब्रह्म विवर्धते ॥ ६. पू० ११. १९  
 यथाऽऽवर्तो जलस्य च ॥ ६. पू० ११. ३०  
 . . . बुद्बुद् . . . . . ॥ ३. ६६. ६  
 स्वरूपमजहस्त्वेव राजतेऽर्थविवर्तवत् ॥ ६. उ० ५४. १७  
 विवर्ततेऽर्थभावेन जलमूर्मितया यथा ॥ ६. पू० ९३. ४६  
 विवर्तमनुधावन्ति . . . . . ॥ ३. १२. ३०  
 यथोदिते दिनकरे कापि याति तमस्विनी ।  
 तथा विवेकेऽभ्युदिते काप्यविद्या विलीयते ॥ ३. ११४. ९  
 दृष्टे सर्वगते बोधे स्वयमेव विलीयते ॥ ३. ११४. ६  
 येन बोधात्मना बुद्धं स ज इत्यभिधीयते ।  
 अद्वैतस्योपशान्तस्य तस्य विश्वं न विद्यते ॥ ६. उ० ४९. १८१





#### APPENDIX IV

*Bhartṛ-harī* AND *The Yogā-vāsiṣṭha*

## वैराग्यशतकम्

दिक्कालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तेषु ।

स्वानुभूत्येकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥ १

भोगा मेघवितानमध्यविलसत्सौदामनीचञ्चला

आयुर्वायुविषट्पिताम्रपटलीलीनाम्बुवद्भङ्गुरम् ।

लोला यौवनलालना तनुमृतामित्वाकलय्य द्रुतं

योगे धैर्यसमाधिसिद्धिसुलभे बुद्धिं विषद्वं बुधाः ॥ ३५

रात्रिः सैव पुनः स एव दिवसो मत्वा मुधा जन्तवो

धावन्त्युद्यमिनस्तथैव निभृतप्रागव्यतत्तत्क्रियाः ।

व्यापारैः पुनरुक्तमुक्तविषयैरेवंविधेनामुना

संसारेण कदर्थिताः कथमहो मोहान् लज्जामहे ॥ ३४

## योगवासिष्ठः

दिकालाद्यनवच्छिन्नरूपत्वादतिविस्तरम् ।

तदनाद्यन्तमाभासं भासनीयविवर्जितम् ॥ ३. १०. ३३

चिन्मात्रविमलं शान्तं तद्रूपं परमात्मनः ॥ ३. १०. ४१

Or

दिकालाद्यनवच्छिन्नमदृष्टोभयकोटिकम् ।

चिन्मात्रमक्षयं शान्तमेकं ब्रह्मास्मि नेतरत् ॥

The first S'loka of the Bikaner Manuscript, (Vide Mitra: *Catalogue*, No. 1216).

Or

दिकालाद्यनवच्छिन्नानन्तचिन्मात्रमूर्तये ।

स्वानुभूत्येकमानाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥

The first S'loka of योगवासिष्ठसारः (Vide Mitra: *Notices of Sanskrit MSS.* Calcutta 1880, Vol. I. p. 192, No. cccxi) and of निर्वाणस्थितिः (*Ibid.*, Vol. ix, p. 283, No. 3208.)

N. B. 'स्वानुभूत्येकमानाय' is a typical expression of Vasistha who does not believe in any other *prमाण*, whereas Bhartr-hari believes in the *Pramāṇatva* of Sāstra (See वाक्यपदीय on page 15 of the Benares edition.)

आयुर्वायुविघटिताभ्रपटलीलम्बाम्बुबद्धहृगुरं

भोगा मेघवितानमध्यविलसत्सौदामनीचञ्चलाः ।

लोला यौवनलालना जलरयः कायः क्षणापायवा-

न्पुत्र त्रासमुपेत्य संसृतिवशान्निर्वाणमन्विष्यताम् ॥ ६. ३० १३६. ३३

पुनर्दिनैककलना शर्वरीसंस्थितिः पुनः ।

पुनस्तान्येव कर्माणि लज्जायै न च तुष्टये ॥ ५. २२. ३१

तमेव भुक्तविरसं व्यापारौघं पुनः पुनः ।

दिवसे दिवसे कुर्वन्प्राज्ञः कस्मान्न लज्जते ॥ ५. २२. ३३



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आत्मतत्त्वेषु भावानामसंस्पृष्टेषु विद्यते ॥ ३. १. २१

सर्वशक्त्यात्मभूतत्वमेकस्यैवेति निर्णयः ॥ ३. १. २२

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## योगवासिष्ठः

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## वाक्यपदीयम्

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## योगवासिष्ठः

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APPENDIX V

KĀLI-DĀSA'S *Megha-dūta* AND *Kumāra-sambhava*  
AND *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*



## मेघदूतम्

कश्चित्कान्ताविरहगुरुणा स्वाधिकारात्प्रमत्तः

शापेनास्तंगमितमहिमा वर्षभोग्येण भर्तुः ॥ १. १

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तस्मिन्नद्रौ . . . . .

. . . . . ।

. . . . . मेघमास्त्रिष्टसानुं

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प्रत्याश्रस्तां सममभिनवैर्जालकैर्मालतीनाम् ।

विद्युद्गर्भः स्तिमितनयनां त्वत्सन्ताये गवाक्षे

वक्तुं धीरः स्तनितवचनैर्मानिनीं प्रक्रमेथाः ॥ २. ३८

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मात्मानं ते चरणपतितं यावदिच्छामि कर्तुम् ।

असैस्तावन्मुहुरपचितैर्दृष्टिरालुप्यते मे

कूरस्तस्मिन्नपि न सहते संगमं नौ कृतान्तः ॥ २. ४५

## योगवासिष्ठः

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वर्षद्वादशकं तदेव गणयन्त्येषैव साऽत्र स्थिता ॥ ६. उ० ११६. ३२

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अस्मिन्महाप्रलयकालसमे वियोगे

यो मां तयेह मम याति गृहं स कः स्यात् ।

नैवास्त्यसौ जगति यः परदुःखशान्त्यै

प्रीत्या निरन्तरं सरलं यतेत ॥ ६. उ० ११९. ३

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नीचैर्गर्जं मुहूर्तकं कुरु दयां सा बाष्पपूर्णक्षणा ।

बाला बालमृणालकोमलतनुस्तन्वी न सोढुं क्षमा

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योगवासिष्ठः

अथ तामतिमात्रविह्वलां सकृपऽऽकाशभवां सरस्वती ।

शफरीं हृदशोषविह्वलां प्रथमां वृष्टिरिवान्वकम्पत ॥

३. १६. ५०



## APPENDIX VI

BHĀRAVĪ'S *Kirātārjunīya* AND *The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*



## किरातार्जुनीयम्

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आपातरम्या विषयाः पर्यन्तपरितापिनः ॥ ११. १२

अन्तकः पर्यवस्थाता जन्मिनः संततापदः ।

इति त्याज्यं भवे भव्यो मुक्तावुत्तिष्ठते जनः ॥ ११. १३



## योगवासिष्ठः

शरदम्बुधरच्छायागतवर्षो यौवनश्रियः ।

आपातरम्या विषयाः पर्यन्तपरितापिनः ॥ ६. उ० ९३. ८४

अन्तकः पर्यवस्थाता जीविते महतामपि ।

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